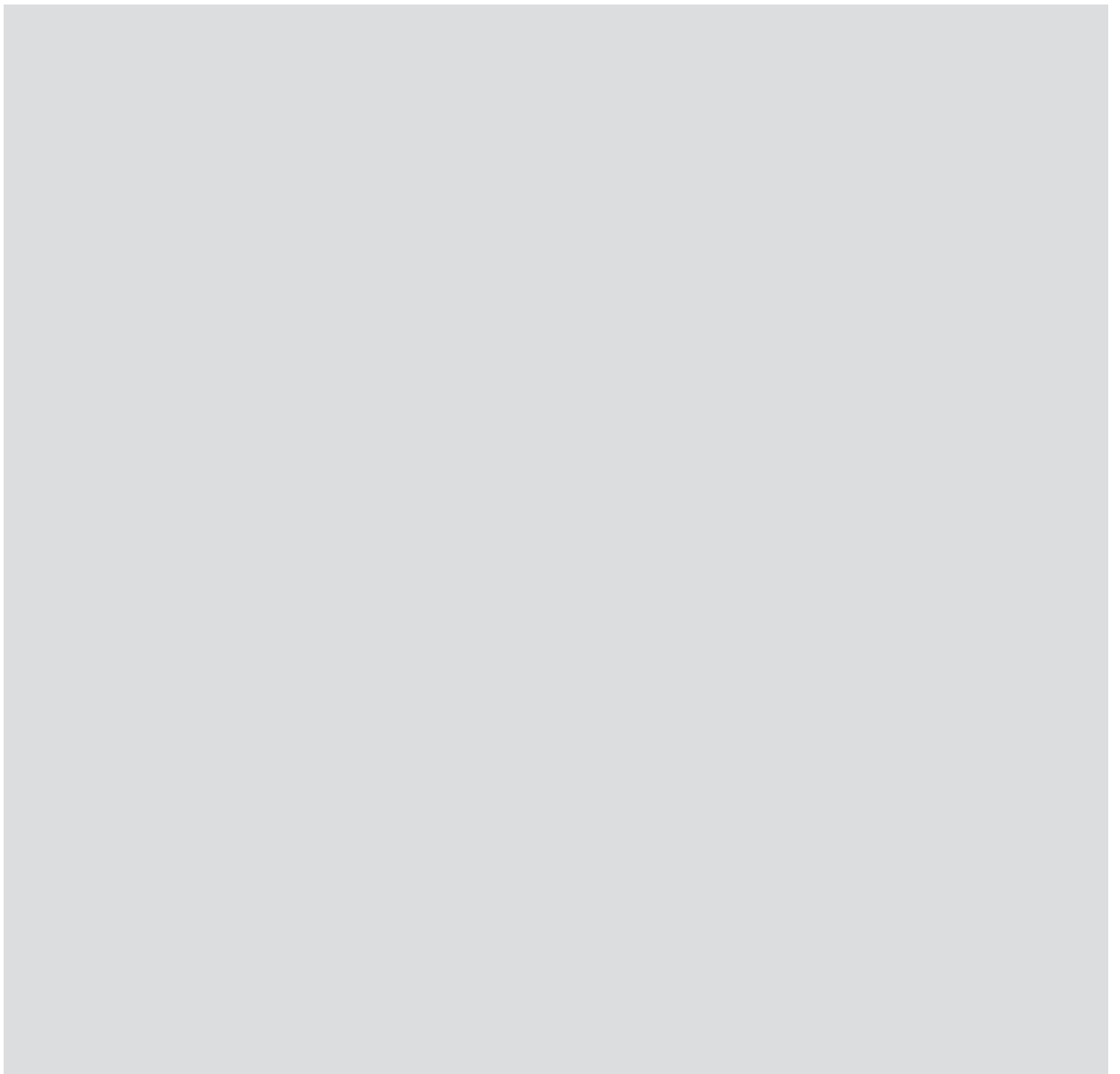




National Platform



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Welcome to Labor's National Platform.

The 46th National Conference concluded in December 2011 providing Labor with a new National Platform.

This National Platform provides members and supporters in the community with a clear statement of Labor's beliefs, values and program for government.

The National Platform outlines the key priorities for Labor over the coming years:

Supporting hardworking families: Labor has always been the party for working people. It's in our DNA. It's what Labor government's do. This Labor government has built on our traditions of reform to deliver more for working families—childcare rebates, tax cuts and investments in Paid Parental Leave, disability support and pensions. Most importantly though, Labor abolished the hated WorkChoices laws which did so much to degrade the pay and conditions of all Australians.

Supporting Jobs and a growing economy: Labor took the decisive action needed to ensure the global recession did not hit our economy and communities. Labor has maintained the discipline to ensure that our economy has continued to grow, jobs have been created, unemployment has remained low and interest rates remain steady. Our economy remains the envy of the world, but we need to ensure that we remain on track for a strong economy with job creation at its centre.

Investing in Australia's future: Labor is the nation building party and the party with its focus firmly on Australia's future. Labor has built the infrastructure now powering our economy and delivering fairness in schools, hospitals and local communities across the nation. We have put in place a fair mining resource rent tax (MRRT) that will ensure the proceeds of the mining boom are invested and shared with all Australians. We are tackling climate change and building a clean energy future.

Only Labor has the values and plans to build the Australia of the future. As we head towards the next federal election all members and supporters should take pride in our achievements to date and redouble their efforts for the election of another Labor government.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G Wright".

George Wright
ALP National Secretary

Chapter 1: Our enduring Labor values

Enduring values

- 1 As times change, our values endure. The Australian Labor Party was formed 120 years ago to help build this nation and improve the lives of ordinary workers and their families, giving them fair shares in a growing economy and supporting the vulnerable. In the 21st century, we still strive to create a fair, prosperous Australia where everyone has opportunity and nobody is left out or left behind. Our core values have been with us throughout our history and the changing fortunes of our nation: opportunity, responsibility, and fairness. This National Platform explains these values and applies them to our commitments for today and tomorrow. It celebrates our achievements and sets out our vision for Australia.
- 2 Labor values are Australian values. Australia is a society enriched by its diversity. Our history is one of hard work, nation building and innovation, proudly welcoming new generations of migrants, respecting Indigenous Australians, weaving a resilient social fabric to support Australians throughout their lives. We are a modern social democratic party which has made Australia better off, fairer and more sustainable. Universal health care, fairness in the workplace, and the age pension are Australian achievements, part of our tradition of working together for the common good and taking care of those with limited capacity to take of themselves.
- 3 Compared to other countries, we are in a good position to face the challenges ahead. Our economy is strong and we emerged from the Global Financial Crisis more successfully than other advanced economies. We have a great record of job creation, low unemployment while maintaining strong public finances and very low public debt. We have a huge flow of mining investment but patchwork pressures, brought in part by the rise of Asia, mean that some parts of our economy are strained by growth while others are being left behind.
- 4 Global power is shifting to our region and our economy is transforming. We need to make sure that the Asian century is also an Australian century. New technologies are reshaping the way we live and work, empowering people to take control of their lives and at the same time creating new uncertainties. We are facing the threat of climate change and seizing the opportunities of a clean energy future. Society is changing too. People live longer lives. Communities and households are taking new forms.
- 5 For Australia, Labor has always been the champion of change. We are ready to meet the new economic, social and environmental challenges of this century and make sure that change works in the best interests of the nation. In government, Labor embraces our tradition of reform and nation building and applies our enduring values to these new challenges.

Reform driven by values

6 Australians were the first people to vote a nation into existence and we are one of the world's oldest parliamentary democracies. Ours is one of the first Labor parties to be formed around the world. We are the original Australian party—in name, purpose and identity—a party deeply woven into this nation's fabric. Every other party formed in Australia in the past 120 years has been in response to Australian Labor.

7 Labor has been shaped by the people of Australia and in turn has shaped the character, culture and opportunities of Australians. In the late 19th century, we grew from the collective struggle for social justice, fighting for better living and working conditions, uniting union members with others to overcome the vested interests of employers and governments. Labor is the party of opportunity and security for working people. Working with a strong trade union movement, in the early 20th century we laid this nation's social foundations through votes for women, fair pay, reasonable working hours, unemployment benefits, workers' compensation and decent pensions.

8 In the mid-20th century, we built our national infrastructure and strengthened Australia's cities and suburbs, through the monumental Snowy Hydro Electricity Scheme, transcontinental railways, providing sewerage and running water to Australian homes. In the 1970s, we opened access to education, health care and legal services, protected our heritage and natural environments and modernised our international relationships. In the 1980s and 1990s, we opened our economy to the world, laying the foundations for today's prosperity, introduced universal superannuation, expanded higher education and legislated for native title.

In each period of our history, Labor's values have shaped our core commitments:

9 Labor is committed to a sustainable market economy. We work for long term prosperity, fairly shared by the whole community. We believe a properly functioning market economy creates wealth and provides opportunity and we look for market-based solutions, with robust and balanced regulation. Market design should promote sustainable growth that delivers for working people, combining free and open exchange with strong and durable institutions. Through a dynamic market-based economy we are committed to giving all Australians opportunities and making sure no-one is left behind. Unrestrained greed is damaging to the public interest.

10 Labor is a party of active government. The Global Financial Crisis demonstrated how markets can fail and prompted new thinking about government's responsibility to ensure that markets works in the public interest, not only for individual gain. Labor believes in the unique and positive role that can be played by government in a market economy. Only governments can ensure universal, high quality education, health care and a social safety net; protect national security; plan for and meet national infrastructure needs and protect the natural environment. Government has a responsibility to invest in public goods, including assets, infrastructure and services, to provide the legal and institutional underpinning for efficient, competitive markets and to intervene where there is market failure. In these and other areas, government involvement achieves better outcomes for all Australians than would be achieved solely through market forces.

11 The Labor party and the trade union movement work together as partners. As a political party, Labor was born out of the labour movement and its struggle for social justice. By working with the movement to create and defend good jobs and fair work and to promote participation and shared responsibility across the workforce, Labor has given millions of Australians the opportunity to build a secure, decent and dignified life and to improve their own and their children's life chances. Labor will continue to protect and advance the rights of working people, including their right to join unions, to organise in the workplace, to bargain collectively and to take industrial action, including the right to strike.

- 12 Trade unions are the largest and most representative community movements in Australia, looking after two million Australians and their families and campaigning for the interests of all workers. We believe a strong trade union movement is necessary to deliver fairer, more cooperative workplaces and contribute to a more equitable and democratic Australia. Our partnership with the trade union movement remains crucial for Australia's future.
- 13 Labor is a party of its members. Our success depends on the support and activism of our members. They provide our candidates at every level of government, and they enrich our policy discussion. Working shoulder-to-shoulder with the trade union movement, members are the party's backbone. We will continue to renew and refresh the experience of members and their involvement in the party and its campaigning.
- 14 Labor supports families. Families form a fundamental part of our society as a basic organising unit and government has a duty to help families give children the best possible start in life. This is essential to providing the opportunity to live, work and be a part of their community and in ensuring all Australians can share in all that this nation can offer.
- 15 Labor is the party of educational opportunity. From our inception, the transformative power of education has been at the heart of Labor's mission. Opening the doors of learning to people who could not otherwise access a quality education has been the achievement, in every generation, of Labor reform. By expanding and reforming education, from early years to schools, from trades and vocations to universities, Labor has transformed the lives of millions of Australians, enabling them to get on and get up. In the 21st century, our mission is to demonstrate that demography is not destiny: that background and the circumstances of birth are no barrier to educational excellence and that every Australian can contribute to our national success.
- 16 Labor is a party of community. As a nation we are at our best when we are working together for the common good. Individual self-interest alone does not create a fair and decent society. We are committed to a society in which every person is treated with respect and dignity and can actively participate and contribute to the life of their community. Labor believes a strong and resilient not for profit sector is part of the nation's social economy, working to provide services and opportunities that enrich Australian lives. We will work to strengthen them and improve their skills and capabilities. We recognise the contribution of philanthropy and will work to foster a regulatory environment which fosters a culture of giving. We celebrate diversity and respect the rights and responsibilities of Australian citizenship.
- 17 Labor is a party of equality. We defend equal rights of citizenship and before the law, support social and economic equality, promote gender equality in the community and the workplace and refuse to accept discrimination and inequality of opportunity in our society.
- 18 Labor is a party of reconciliation. We have apologised for past injustices in the National Apology to Australia's Indigenous People. We have worked for land rights and native title. We are investing to reduce Indigenous disadvantage and we are working to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.
- 19 Labor defends Australia's national security, promotes our national interest and protects human rights. For more than a century, Labor has played a significant role in defending our national security, fighting against oppression and injustice and supporting international efforts for peace and development. While the challenges change, our resolve to protect Australia does not. As a nation, we can give no greater respect than to those who take up military service in the defence of Australia and of our values in the world. We honour and cherish our military veterans for their proud contribution to our nation and their willingness to sacrifice themselves for our common good.

- 20 Labor believes Australia's interests are best protected and advanced by promoting peace and cooperation, including through our historic alliance with the United States, international forums like the United Nations, engaging with Asia, through public diplomacy and overseas aid and development.
- 21 Labor is a democratic party. Labor believes that every person has the right to a say, directly or indirectly, in the decisions that affect his or her life. We believe in an individual's freedom of conscience and their right to express beliefs without fear. We are committed to open, democratic and accountable government and to empowering citizens and improving their participation in governance and fostering advocacy for those who cannot advocate for themselves. Only Labor believes in genuine broad based engagement in government and tackling the opportunities and challenges facing Australia. Labor believes in genuine tripartite processes in dealing with industrial, economic and reform challenges and in genuine community and industry engagement in delivering a clean energy future.
- 22 Labor is a party of human rights. Labor believes in a just and tolerant society that fully protects the rights and freedoms of all people in Australia. Labor supports the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international treaties to which we are a signatory.

Our values

Opportunity

- 23 Labor is a party that shares the opportunities of this rich and diverse country. A country where privilege and power do not determine the life course of each individual or community. A country where people can shape their own lives and work together to contribute proudly to the life of their communities.
- 24 Australia can be a nation in which everybody has opportunity to shape their own lives, develop their potential and enjoy the rewards of hard work. Labor believes that background and privilege should not determine success in life.
- 25 We believe in:
- giving all Australians the opportunity to achieve their potential and contribute to their community and national life
 - empowering all Australians to shape their own lives for the better
 - making available the dignity and benefits of work to all those Australians who can participate
 - providing the best education, from cradle to grave, where background is no barrier to achievement
 - supporting family life and improving living standards and quality of life
 - rewarding the effort of hard work and supporting people to enter, re-enter and progress in the workforce.
 - providing access to employment, education, housing, health care, a strong social safety net, information technology, culture and recreation, and legal rights
 - building an economy which provides sustained economic growth and opportunity, decoupled from the growth of emissions and environmental damage.

Fairness

26 At the core of Labor's history, beliefs and aspirations is the need to make sure everybody gets a fair go.

27 Labor believes in:

- treating all Australians with dignity and respect
- sticking together and sharing fairly the risks that we all face
- upholding the rights, benefits and duties of citizenship and democratic participation
- a fair distribution of wealth and income
- a reconciled Australia where Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians create a stronger future together
- support for Australians with particular needs, including Indigenous Australians, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, the homeless, people with disabilities and mental illness and older Australians, to live decent and dignified lives, access opportunity and participate along with other Australians.

Responsibility

28 Labor believes that taking active responsibility for ourselves, each other and our future is a fundamental value, at the heart of our identity and our success as a community.

29 Responsibilities and rights come together and they require us to:

- protect and support children and families and respect the caring responsibilities of parents and family members
- take individual responsibility for ourselves, including the responsibility to get work and contribute to our independence and personal development through work, as far as each of us is able
- share responsibility for our environment and protect it for future generations, including by taking action to create a clean energy future
- ensure that businesses act responsibly, obey the law, pay their fair share and contribute to the communities in which they operate
- hold governments and other institutions to account and ensure they meet high standards and work in the public interest.

Our vision for Australia's future

- 30 Our National Platform sets out our values and a framework for the policies that will deliver a better future for Australia. It does so in the following areas:
- a strong and diverse economy, economic management and reform, more job opportunities and greater workforce participation through investment in skills, innovation and incentives to work, save and learn
 - achieving growth across the whole nation: our national infrastructure, regional Australia and primary industries
 - the transition to a clean energy future and protecting our heritage and natural environment
 - fairness and opportunity for working families
 - our ageing population
 - education, early childhood, science and research
 - our long-term health needs and challenges
 - ensuring all Australians get a fair go, including Indigenous Australians, people with disability, carers and people with mental illness
 - democracy and good government
 - foreign affairs, national security and defence.
- 31 Labor is working to create a better future for Australian: a prosperous, forward looking nation, a stronger and united community and a fair society where every Australian has opportunity to live a good life and nobody is left behind. Our party platform applies these values to the challenges of today and tomorrow and renews our determination to deliver them for all Australians.

Chapter 2: A strong economy for all Australians

Introduction

- 1 Labor is delivering a strong and sustainable economy for all Australians. We are committed to the ongoing reform and economic management that will increase productivity, create good jobs and secure the future health of the Australian economy. By modernising our infrastructure, managing the transition to clean energy, investing in skills and innovation and advancing tax reform, Labor is transforming our economy. Labor's commitment to a strong economy is driven by its determination to build a good society and give all Australians a better quality of life which allows the broader community to share in our nation's prosperity. A strong economy allows Labor to deliver the programs and services that Australians need, and particularly to support the those who are the most vulnerable in our society.
- 2 Labor acted decisively during the Global Financial Crisis and saved hundreds of thousands of Australian jobs. Labor has continued to ensure the Australian economy's fundamentals are strong. We have low unemployment, robust public finances with very low public debt, and a huge flow of mining investment. Our banks are well capitalised and among the highest rated in the world. But we are an economy and a society in transition. Global economic power is shifting to the Asia-Pacific. Our society is ageing. While some important steps have been taken in recent years to extend the benefits of economic growth to all Australians, Labor understands that more needs to be done to address income inequality, including for those in low paid work. The world is moving to a clean energy future. Labor has the vision and the policies to lead this change, and to work to ensure that our future is one based on prosperity fairly shared amongst our citizens. We are at our best when we help Australians adapt to change. We have managed the recent effects of the GFC and natural disasters, and will confront future challenges from a position of genuine strength and compassion.
- 3 Patchwork pressures mean that while some parts of our economy are strained by growth, others risk being left behind. The demand for our minerals, driven by the rise of Asia, represents a huge opportunity for Australia. The high dollar and a cautious consumer are making it tough for retailers and our trade exposed sectors like tourism, higher education and manufacturing. Uncertainty abroad is having an impact on the confidence of consumers and on domestic businesses. The mining boom also contributes to skills shortages elsewhere in the economy and increased wage and price pressures. The challenge for Australia is to convert the opportunities created by the mining boom into sustainable gains in national prosperity and good jobs. We need to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are redistributed through the economy to those on low wages, not in work or reliant on welfare. We are pursuing a high technology, high skill, clean energy economy that is self-sustaining, beyond our reliance on mineral exports. Labor believes that government must pursue these priorities for the long-term strength of our economy and society.
- 4 While our core values do not change, Australia is once again in the process of re-creating itself, making the changes that enable us to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The foundations of our prosperity are constantly shifting, as the climate changes, technologies evolve and global markets adjust. To secure quality jobs, we must re-tool our industries and re-skill our people to rise to the challenges and opportunities of our time. Knowledge, skills and ideas have become increasingly important to business success and individual opportunity, as developing countries move up the value chain and global competition intensifies. Innovation is the key to building and revitalising existing industries: to support regions through hard times; to keep improving our standard of living; and to generate quality jobs and opportunities for all.
- 5 We know that strong and sustainable public finances underpin the progressive future we want for the next generation. Delivering the health care, pensions and education needs of future generations will require prudent budget management and prioritising support for those most in need.

Labor values

- 6 We believe in the power of education, enterprise and equality of opportunity. Labor will manage the economy in the interests of working families and all Australians. We believe this is best achieved by maintaining strong public finances and pursuing policies that enable a sustainable rate of economic growth, job creation, low inflation and interest rates, and increased productivity. Labor believes in the importance of direct and indirect policy measures that spread opportunity and enhance the productive capacity of the economy through education and skills, infrastructure and innovation investment. This in turn provides support for manufacturing and small businesses.
- 7 Labor is committed to lifting workforce participation and achieving full employment, meaning everyone who wants to work is supported and able to find a good job in a reasonable period of time. Good jobs and job security provide dignity and are the keys to social and personal wellbeing, stable family life and strong communities. We want to maximise the opportunity for Australians to be employed in secure, high-wage, high-skill jobs. Increased participation is good for economic output and living standards and an essential response to the ageing population. Labor is adopting an integrated strategy to lift workforce participation levels, including through education and training, welfare, taxation and industry policies. Labor will make sure no one is left behind.
- 8 Labor believes in a strong economy that delivers for all people. Economic growth must be shared, particularly at times of increasing cost of living due to global instability. Labor's commitment to social justice drives our economic policies. Labor believes in providing opportunities for all Australians to contribute to and benefit from economic growth and wealth creation, through a fair tax system, quality public services, equal access to educational opportunities, and a decent social safety net. We are committed to:
 - a just society where no one is left behind
 - all Australians having the opportunity to enjoy a reasonable standard of living to enable them and their families to live with dignity building a fairer Australia with a more equitable distribution of assets, income and employment underpinned by a strong and vibrant union movement giving all Australians the opportunity to be educated, trained and job ready throughout their working lives
 - improving financial incentives for workforce participation through taxation and welfare reforms, alongside training and industry policies and increasing the affordability and supply of quality childcare
 - removing the barriers that prevent people with disability and their carers from participating in the Australian economy
 - supporting and protecting those unable to work
 - promoting economic growth in regional and rural Australia providing a fair and just level of retirement adequacy.
- 9 Labor believes that public finances should be managed responsibly, and that the budget should be kept in surplus on average over the medium term. This strategy provides the flexibility for the budget to vary with economic conditions to support macroeconomic stability, while ensuring public finances remain strong over time. In a growing economy, returning to surplus will help protect our future and ensure our continued productivity and prosperity. Strong public finances also provide a buffer against unfolding uncertainties in the global economy and allow government to provide for the most marginalised in our community. We took responsible action in tough economic times. We are now taking responsible action and making the hard fiscal decisions to build a strong and sustainable economy for the future.

- 10 Labor believes government plays an important role in the economy, both in short- and long-term economic management and in establishing a framework of rules that enhance stability, fairness and certainty. In line with our social democratic values, Labor believes government must play an active role in shaping the economy, including during crises. Labor is committed to a fair market society, where government is willing to intervene for the sake of long term prosperity, opportunity and fairness.
- 11 Labor believes that open markets, supported by a framework of pro-competitive rules, provide the best incentives for innovation, enterprise, investment and hard work. Australia's openness to the global economy has made Australia a more competitive, productive and prosperous nation. The benefits of an open market have flowed to everyday Australians through lower consumer prices and increased employment opportunities.
- 12 Labor believes Australia's long-term prosperity depends on competing successfully in global markets. This means Australia needs to produce high quality goods and services that the world wants to buy, and remove barriers to overseas markets. Labor will work to ensure major policy settings like skills development and training, infrastructure planning, tax and regulation frameworks do not hold businesses back from achieving their full potential in global markets while at the same time ensuring that all Australians enjoy a fair share of the benefits of growth.
- 13 Labor also recognises that markets sometimes fail and understands that the market will often create the most equitable and efficient distribution of power, wealth and services. Labor believes that government has a responsibility to intervene to address market failures and the extremes of capitalism. Labor supports an active role for governments in addressing market failure, and improving equity and social justice through the full range of government policy instruments including expenditure, taxation, regulation, and the provision of goods and services.
- 14 Labor believes strong regulatory frameworks in both the global and the Australian economies are important to ensure that markets operate with transparency and openness, and to prevent and expose misconduct. Strong regulatory frameworks are also necessary to ensure that markets adhere to broader goals of social responsibility in relation to the environment, the community and the rights of employees.
- 15 Labor is committed to good corporate governance and social responsibility. Transparency, accountability and disclosure are at the core of good corporate governance and social responsibility practices. Labor will ensure that obligations on companies and their officers result in comprehensive and comprehensible disclosures for shareholders and stakeholders and appropriate accountability. We also welcome, encourage and applaud the growing number of strategic partnerships between the private and not-for-profit sectors in a wide range of areas. Labor will facilitate opportunities for responsible employers conducting their operations in a sustainable manner that benefits the entire population and broader economy.
- 16 Labor believes in sustainable economic management. Labor is committed to laying the foundations for future prosperity and to protecting the environment for future generations. As the world moves to a carbon constrained economy, Labor believes in Australia taking action to invest in a clean energy future. Putting a price on carbon is the most cost-effective way to take action and ensure our long term competitiveness. This key economic reform is vital to secure a sustainable Australian economy. Australia is among those countries with the most to lose from climate change, Australia also has the potential to benefit substantially from investing in a clean energy future. Labor has a vision of Australia growing millions of clean technology jobs into the future.
- 17 Labor stands for a fair go. We believe that Australian industry and business deserve the chance to compete on their own merits, in both government procurement and private sector projects at home and abroad. Governments should assist them to match their capabilities to the new market opportunities.
- 18 Labor seeks national progress through global collaboration. The scale and complexity of the challenges we face demand a global research effort. Labor recognises that international collaboration is critical to developing our own research strengths, and harnessing the strengths of others.

Labor achievements

Jobs and productivity

We have:

- acted quickly and decisively to protect jobs and to save the country from the global recession. Australia was one of very few advanced economies to avoid a recession during the Global Financial Crisis, and has since grown at a solid pace
- created around 750,000 jobs—and our unemployment rate remains at around half that of the United States and Europe
- stabilised Australia's financial system against the worst effects of the crisis by introducing bank guarantees—without them, our banks would have lent less, and interest rates would have risen
- led the way in global reform following the Global Financial Crisis. Through the Group of 20, Australia has ensured regulatory frameworks have been revised to help secure future economic stability
- promoted workforce participation and invested in skills—we built 100 trade training centres that will help meet the skills shortage and train the next generation of tradespeople
- invested \$36 billion in road, rail and ports to ensure that our Australian industry has the infrastructure it needs to compete in the global economy
- started building the National Broadband Network to help business access new opportunities to expand their markets nationally and internationally by overcoming the tyranny of distance
- protected jobs and invested in local schools with the largest modernisation of school infrastructure in Australia's history through the Building the Education Revolution program
- scrapped WorkChoices and introduced a fair workplace relations system that protects workers' entitlements while ensuring flexibility for business
- improved employee entitlements under the General Employee Entitlements and Redundancy Scheme
- introduced Australia's first ever paid parental leave scheme
- reduced barriers to work by tripling the tax-free threshold and phasing out the Dependent Spouse Tax Offset
- improved the effectiveness of Australia's anti-dumping system
- managed government expenditure responsibly in difficult times, with taxes as a share of Gross Domestic Product below the level under the Howard Government.

Cost of living

We have:

- delivered three rounds of personal tax cuts
- increased the Child Care Rebate
- increased the pension
- kept pressure off interest rates
- introduced an Education Tax Refund for laptops, school text books and uniforms
- increased the Family Tax Benefit for families with teenagers
- boosted savings through an increase in the superannuation guarantee and higher contribution limits for over 50s

- made superannuation fairer through an annual superannuation contribution for 3.5 million low income earners
- helped small business during the GFC by providing a small business tax break as part of the \$42 billion Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan
- introduced a Competitive and Sustainable Banking Package so consumers get a better deal and smaller lenders can put more competitive pressure on the big banks. We have:
- banned exit fees outright on new home loans
- boosted consumer flexibility to transfer deposits and mortgages
- introduced a mandatory key fact sheet for new home loan customers
- empowered the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to prosecute anti-competitive price signalling
- fast-tracked legislation to get a better deal for Australians with credit cards
- launched a national community awareness campaign to empower consumers in banking
- set up a taskforce with the Reserve Bank of Australia to enhance Automatic Teller Machine competition reforms.

Labor priorities

Responsible fiscal policy

- 19 Labor is keeping government finances strong, while also taking action to support jobs and growth and lay the foundations for future prosperity. Labor is committed to sound public finances by adhering to a fiscal strategy that keeps the budget in surplus on average over the medium-term. This provides the flexibility for the budget to vary with changing economic conditions to support economic stability, while also ensuring our public finances remain strong over time. Labor put in place fiscal support for the economy during the global recession to protect jobs, and is returning the budget to surplus as our economy continues to strengthen. This strategy has ensured that Australia's public finances remain among the strongest in the developed world, with a rapid return to surplus and lower net debt than any of the major advanced economies. Labor will operate temporary budget deficits during periods of economic downturn and build surpluses during periods where growth is above the long-term trend.
- 20 We have outlined our strategy to return the budget to surplus in 2012–13, and we are determined to achieve that despite increased global instability. The return to surplus is occurring ahead of all of the major advanced economies and years before countries like the US and United Kingdom, and Canada and Germany. This is being achieved by strict limits on spending and budget savings to make room to fund new priorities.

Stable monetary policy

- 21 Labor wants to maximise sustainable economic growth, consistent with maintaining low and stable inflation. Labor is committed to the independence of the Reserve Bank and expects it will fulfil each of its charter objectives of stability, employment and general economic welfare. Labor fully supports the independent conduct of monetary policy by the Reserve Bank and its medium-term inflation target of an average of two to three per cent over the course of the economic cycle.
- 22 Labor is committed to investing in the long-term drivers of growth and productivity so we can maintain growth with low inflation. By addressing supply-side pressures and increasing the productive capacity of the economy, inflation and interest rates can remain lower over the longer term.

Improving corporate and financial regulation for a stronger economy

- 23 Labor believes in robust corporate regulation as a foundation for investor confidence and sustainable economic growth. Further, Labor believes that robust corporate regulation is an essential means of protecting employees' entitlements. Labor will ensure that officers cannot avoid their obligations and will ensure effective enforcement of officer obligations and the imposition of penalties that reflect the gravity of contraventions.
- 24 Labor supports Australia's strong system of financial regulation overseen by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, the Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority and the Reserve Bank of Australia, and will continue to ensure that Australia's regulators are adequately resourced to continue their work.
- 25 In response to matters highlighted by the GFC and local collapses such as Storm Financial and Trio Capital, Labor has committed to comprehensive reforms in key sectors of financial services including pay-day lending, reverse mortgages and financial planning.
- 26 Labor's Future of Financial Advice reforms ban the payment of sales commissions to financial planners. It introduces and imposes a new duty for advisers to place their interest ahead of their clients and impose a new requirement for advisers to seek regular client approval to charge ongoing fees.
- 27 Labor is committed to establishing a single, standard and uniform national regulatory structure for the regulation and supervision of all financial products and their distribution, including consumer credit.
- 28 Labor will include new responsible lending provisions in its national regulatory framework for financial products.
- 29 Labor will continue to improve regulation around short selling, consumer dispute and compensation arrangements and will put in place simplified, easy to understand, cost effective disclosure regimes and rating agencies.
- 30 Under Labor, Australia will be a strong voice in international efforts to address weaknesses in the regulatory and supervisory framework for the global economy to help ensure greater future stability in the global economy.
- 31 Labor is also reforming superannuation to ensure Australians get a better deal from their superannuation fund, including through the new low cost superannuation product MySuper. Unnecessary fees and charges will be prohibited within MySuper and APRA will publish information on costs and performance, making fund comparisons easier.

- 32 Labor will continue to improve corporate governance practices, the Corporations Act and related legislation to ensure that:
- performance-based executive remuneration arrangements are genuinely linked to long-term performance and consideration of the role of the remuneration consultancy industry in the setting of executive remuneration
 - companies fully disclose the remuneration, including options, termination payments, non-recourse loans and equity value protection schemes, of directors and senior management in a comprehensive and comprehensible manner and are accountable to shareholders
 - companies use their general meetings to appropriately communicate with shareholders
 - shareholders retain the ability to call an extraordinary general meeting of a company and shareholders and institutional investors exercise their voting rights appropriately and regularly
 - appropriate penalties are imposed for breaches of the corporations law, in particular for insider trading and trading while insolvent
 - the election of directors of listed public companies is transparent and direct voting of proxies is encouraged
 - shareholders are informed about the directors' relationships with the company and other directors when standing for election
 - companies continue to appoint independent directors to the board of directors
 - the independence of audit and auditors is maintained
 - not-for-profit organisations improve their governance arrangements and disclosure
 - disclosure requirements for transactions between related parties are strengthened
 - ASIC and the Director of Public Prosecutions regularly review their operations to ensure thorough management of law enforcement and prosecutions
 - corporate governance addresses responsibility to employees, the environment and the community and corporate regulation removes impediments to acting in a socially responsible manner
 - comparative wage justice driven by executive remuneration consultants does not result in inflated unjustified executive salaries.

A price on carbon

- 33 Labor believes reducing carbon pollution is critical to our future economic and environmental health. It is a belief founded squarely on science. We are advised by scientists that the world's climate is changing and that there will be severe, adverse effects on our nation if the trend continues. No party acting in the public interest can ignore such advice.
- 34 Labor's plan for a Clean Energy Future will transform our economy, so that we produce and use energy in a cleaner, smarter way.
- 35 The plan involves four fundamental initiatives:
- introducing a carbon price and using every cent raised to assist households, support jobs and tackle climate change
 - promoting innovation and investment in renewable energy
 - encouraging energy efficiency in our homes, offices and factories
 - creating opportunities on the land to cut pollution and improve productivity, sustainability and resilience.

- 36 Our plan will ensure the Australian economy remains globally competitive in the years ahead. It will drive investment in clean energy and low pollution technologies, supporting the industries and jobs of the future. It will position us to play a key role in the emerging low-carbon goods and services sector, which is already estimated to be worth about \$5 trillion dollars, and to employ 28 million people. Labor understands that delaying this transformation will only lead to higher costs down the track.
- 37 The core element of our plan is putting a price on carbon pollution from polluters and allowing the market to drive the investment and innovation needed to transform to a global clean energy economy. In addition, complementary measures will be implemented to develop clean energy industries and support households, workers and communities. Alternative policies for reducing our levels of carbon pollution—such as more regulation or taxpayer-funded subsidies will impose much higher costs on the economy. Ultimately, these higher costs will be borne by businesses and households.
- 38 Labor will provide extensive compensation for those affected by a price on carbon. Nine out of ten households will receive assistance, with almost six million households receiving assistance that meets or exceeds their expected average price impact. Over four million households—almost half of all households—will get assistance that provides a 20 per cent buffer over and above their expected price impact.
- 39 The compensation package includes tax reform. All taxpayers earning up to \$80,000 will get a tax cut under the package. Labor will also increase the tax-free threshold to \$18,200. That will mean that up to one million people will no longer have to lodge a tax return.
- 40 In addition to the carbon price, complementary measures will be implemented to develop clean energy industries and support households, workers and communities.
- 41 Labor will eliminate or, where impractical, reduce unintentional incentives which may exist in government policies and programs which would support environmentally harmful activity.

Improving the tax system

- 42 Labor is committed to a fair and sustainable tax system that provides incentives for all Australians to work and undertake productive enterprise while guaranteeing adequate revenue to provide quality public services and ensuring an equitable distribution of income and wealth. Public confidence in Australia's tax system depends on a simple and transparent tax system where everyone pays their fair share of tax. Labor is implementing important tax reforms to improve competitiveness, boost savings through superannuation, make superannuation fairer, simplify personal tax, reduce barriers to participation and provide better assistance to families. We will also continue the public discussions about further ideas for tax reform.
- 43 We want a better return on the profits made from extracting our resources and a strong, sustainable resource sector for the future. These are non-renewable resources that can only be extracted once. We are working with the resources industry to design and deliver a profits-based resource tax.
- 44 Future tax reforms will:
- ensure there is a sound revenue base for all levels of government for investing in social and economic infrastructure and quality public services
 - remove barriers to investment and workforce participation
 - support families
 - boost savings and make superannuation fairer

- enhance the capacity of Australian business and industry to successfully integrate into the global economy, so Australian companies win places in global supply chains, while ensuring that business continues to pay its fair share of tax revenue
- simplify the tax system for individuals and businesses while tackling avoidance activity
- preserve and enhance a progressive and fair tax system, where all Australians pay their fair share
- ensure that executives and the wealthy pay a fairer share of tax
- minimise the impact of high effective marginal tax rates, particularly on those moving from welfare to work or the second income earners in low- to middle-income families
- ensure that executives and the wealthy pay a fair share of tax and implement measures to curb excessive executive salary payments
- further reduce inconsistencies in the taxation of income from different forms of assets
- ensure that the tax system does not make housing less affordable for Australian families
- ensure that Australia's financial stability is preserved and that the potentially harmful effects of excessive short-term financial speculation are minimised
- enhance allocative efficiency by not distorting investment and consumption decisions, except where interventions would address market failures and serve environmental or social purposes.

45 Labor is committed to a fair and sustainable tax system that provides incentives for all Australians to work and undertake productive enterprise while guaranteeing adequate revenue to provide quality public services and ensuring an equitable distribution of income and wealth. Public confidence in Australia's tax system depends on a simple and transparent tax system where everyone pays their fair share of tax. Labor is implementing important tax reforms to improve competitiveness, boost savings through superannuation, make superannuation fairer, simplify personal tax, reduce barriers to participation and provide better assistance to families. We will also continue the public discussions about further ideas for tax reform.

46 Labor supports the principles behind the alienation of personal services income tax rules and will apply these principles with consistency and transparency. However, the Australia's Future Tax System Review found that the current rules are not fully effective, and are complex and uncertain. Labor will consider a revised regime to prevent the alienation of personal services income.

47 Labor will continue to support efforts to establish an international agreement that would require the tax authorities to share information in relation to individuals and corporations suspected of tax evasion or money laundering. Labor is committed to supporting the growing global trend of requiring oil, gas and extractive industry companies to report publicly on their revenue, profits and taxes and royalties paid on a country-by-country basis.

A professional finance sector

48 Labor recognises the fundamental importance of a comprehensive, professional, efficient and competitive finance sector in delivering essential services such as banking, insurance and superannuation to the Australian community. The industry underpins many business and personal activities through credit and other financial services that form the foundations for economic prosperity and growth. A vibrant finance sector is a growth sector providing significant employment and career opportunities for many Australians.

- 49 A well regulated and comprehensive local banking and finance sector has been of paramount importance to Australia's capacity to manage the consequences of the GFC. Labor will continue to take steps to promote an Australian finance sector that functions in accessible, affordable and fair manner by ensuring our financial institutions are:
- regulated appropriately and professionally
 - governed in a transparent and accountable manner
 - staffed by appropriately trained and resourced professionals
 - required to compete ethically and in the interests of all Australians.
 - operating free of conflicts of interest
 - investing in domestic jobs and skills development.
- 50 It is in the national interest to ensure that Australia's finance industry has comprehensive local capability to meet the needs of both the domestic and global economies.
- 51 The strength of our regulatory regime, together with effective competition policy and consumer protections will ensure our finance sector has the best chance to make its full contribution to national wellbeing as well as providing a platform for growth in the export of financial services to our region and the world. We want Australia to become a financial services centre in the region and will continue to undertake the necessary reforms to achieve this. That means we need to foster a professional, efficient, ethical and innovative marketplace for financial products and industry planning and investment in employment, technology and skill development across the sector.
- 52 Competition between financial markets will promote better outcomes for investors and productivity growth throughout the financial services sector. Labor has made considerable progress in financial market reform. The government recently approved new market integrity rules that will allow for the introduction of competition in financial markets. The government also approved the licence for a new operator to establish a market, subject to a range of pre-conditions.
- 53 Labor will continue to improve corporate governance practices and legislation to ensure that performance-based executive remuneration arrangements are genuinely linked to long-term performance and are not excessive, and that companies fully disclose the remuneration of directors and senior management.
- 54 To restore trust and confidence in the financial planning industry, we will introduce comprehensive reform to improve trust and confidence in the financial planning industry, including:
- a ban on conflicted payments to advisers
 - a new legal duty to put clients' interests ahead of those of financial planners and
 - a new requirement for advisers to seek a renewed mandate from their customers every two years.
- 55 These reforms will encourage more Australians to seek financial advice, by improving trust and confidence in the financial planning industry. They are also a critical part of our plan to encourage a professional financial planning industry.

Competitive and sustainable banking system

- 56 Labor promotes a competitive and sustainable banking system for all. Australians are compelled to participate in the finance sector and as such the industry bears national economic and social significance. The industry must provide its products and services transparently and responsibly, balancing the needs of consumers, employees, shareholders and the economy. Our banks are highly profitable compared to their overseas counterparts, and Labor expects them to continue supporting the communities in which they operate.

57 We have already introduced reforms so consumers get a better deal, and small lenders can put more competitive pressure on the big banks, allowing our financial system to continue to provide a sustainable flow of credit to households and businesses. We believe vigorous competition underpinned by ethical practices, prudent supervision, consumer protection and transparency is the best way to get a better deal for families and create a system that offers real choice. Labor believes that strong prudential supervision and other regulation has greatly benefited both the financial sector and the consumers, and will continue to ensure that important reforms such as the Future of Financial Advice are pursued to the benefit of all Australians. Labor believes all Australians should have access to information about key elements of our financial system. We will ensure our financial regulations continue to publish information about the size, nature and structure of our financial institutions, and work to ensure that information about the levels of prices and fees in the market continues to be available. Financial product and service providers must be required to act in the best interests of their customers and clients at all times. Labor has worked hard to remove conflicted remuneration practices and structures throughout the financial sector and we will continue to work with the industry and unions to ensure more appropriate remuneration systems.

58 To support smaller lenders so they can put more competitive pressure on the big banks, we will:

- build a new pillar in the banking system based on the combined competitive power of our mutual credit unions and building societies
- confirm the Financial Claims Scheme as a permanent feature of our financial system, to secure critical deposit funding for smaller lenders
- invest \$4 billion to support the Residential Mortgage Backed Securities market that many of our smaller lenders rely on to make cheaper loans
- accelerate a 'bullet bond' structure for Residential Mortgage Backed Securities issuance to strengthen and diversify funding for smaller lenders.

59 To secure the long-term safety and sustainability of our financial system, we will:

- allow all banks, credit unions and building societies to issue covered bonds to broaden access to cheaper, more stable and longer-term funding, and harness our national superannuation savings to domestically fund more productive investment in our economy
- develop a deep and liquid corporate bond market and reduce our reliance on offshore wholesale funding market through the trading of Commonwealth Government Securities on a securities exchange.

60 These reforms build on our decisive action during the GFC to secure our financial system and preserve the competitive foundations of Australia's banking sector. We worked hard to help smaller lenders compete with the big banks by supporting their access to vital funding sources through our deposit and wholesale funding guarantees and \$16 billion investment in AAA-rated Residential Mortgage Backed Securities. We have also introduced tough new laws to crack down on unfair mortgage exit fees—so customers can seek out a better deal. A competitive and sustainable banking system is central to our broad economic agenda, and continues our record of strong and responsible economic management.

Skilled migration

61 Labor will continue to adopt a long-term approach when setting annual immigration levels. Australia operates in a global economy with an increasing number of skilled and other workers wishing to migrate to Australia. This means we must continue to work hard to prevent the brain drain of talented Australian employees offshore and develop systems that ensure the best skilled workers who can contribute to national economic development are selected.

- 62 Labor is committed to a range of policies to lift workforce participation and the qualification level of the workforce in response to an ageing population and the demand for higher levels of skill and mobility. We recognise that falling workforce participation could pose a serious capacity constraint on our economic growth, and we are committed to using Australia's skilled migration program as an important part of the policy response to this challenge.
- 63 Labor's immigration planning framework will take into account net overseas migration, its positive and negative impacts on employment and training opportunities for Australian residents, demographic trends, and other factors while remaining responsive to current and longer-term economic needs.
- 64 Labor will ensure that all Australian jobs and industries are regulated under migration law, consistent with Australia's international obligations. To this effect, Labor will review the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth) with a view to ensuring that the definition of the migration zone encapsulates all offshore Australian jobs and industries where possible.
- 65 Labor's skilled migration policies:
- will be informed by ongoing consultation with industry, unions, the education sector and state and territory governments
 - should be underpinned by the identification of emerging skill shortages across different sectors and complement domestic training policies to fill those shortages
 - will ensure that, as far as possible, skilled vacancies are filled locally.
- 66 Labor will administer a skilled migration program that:
- supplements domestic training policies in targeting skills shortages that cannot be filled locally
 - balances the temporary and permanent skilled visa programs, recognising the increasing numbers of permanent visas granted onshore
 - is demand driven, with greater emphasis on migrants sponsored by employers into jobs where there are demonstrated skills shortages
 - recognises the different skill needs that exist across and within states and territories and metropolitan and regional and rural communities
 - allows Australia to compete internationally for skilled labour
 - has the necessary tests and checks, and resources to ensure the integrity of the system and recognise the primary right of Australian workers to Australian jobs
 - is underpinned by rigorous safeguards to ensure that employers have made all possible efforts to fill positions locally in order to protect the primary rights of Australian workers to Australian jobs and ensure that migrants are not filling the jobs that Australians could be undertaking
 - protects temporary overseas skilled workers from exploitation.
- 67 Labor understands that both permanent and temporary skilled migration will play an important role in delivering sustainable economic growth. Labor prefers permanent skilled migration to temporary skilled migration because permanent migrants:
- provide a stable, effective and targeted source of skilled workers
 - have a greater stake in Australia's future and in integrating into all aspects of Australian community life
 - are less susceptible to exploitation and more secure in their jobs, so are less likely to generate negative impacts on Australian workers, in terms of wages, employment conditions and job and training opportunities.

- 68 The permanent skilled migration program should:
- encourage an appreciated balance between independent government-sponsored and employment sponsored migration
 - ensure that non-sponsored skilled migration is targeted on skills in critical need in the economy
 - provide state and territory governments with the capacity to address the skill shortages in their jurisdiction have the necessary checks to ensure that migrants have the competencies and qualifications claimed recognise the importance of English language skills in finding skilled employment
 - provide information, including on workplace rights and responsibilities, for skilled permanent migrants and their families to welcome them into the Australian community.
- 69 The temporary skilled migration program should:
- only be used to fill short-term skill shortages that cannot be met locally
 - require employers accessing overseas workers to make, as a condition of use of such workers, a commensurate investment in training of local workers, including through apprenticeships
 - be based on a rigorous and transparent process to ensure that employers have made all possible efforts to fill positions locally
 - ensure overseas workers are provided with genuine market rates and conditions equal to those received by equivalent Australian workers in their industry or occupation to prevent the undermining of those entitlements, and be based on a rigorous and transparent process to ensure that employers have made all possible efforts to fill positions locally.
 - include a targeted monitoring program that recognises the risks of exploitation across different employers, occupations and sectors and imposes effective sanctions on those who breach the law
 - ensure that workers, if dismissed from their employment, are able to remain in Australia while any challenge to the dismissal is before Fair Work Australia or the courts, to make workers less vulnerable to exploitation
 - provide quick processing of visas to employers who have a record of compliance
 - provide the relevant external agencies with the information to effectively regulate overseas workers, including work safety and industrial relations agencies
 - ensure that overseas workers have the relevant qualifications for the trade or profession
 - ensure that the children of temporary migrants have access to education
 - Labor will ensure that all categories of temporary workers will not be exploited through sham contracting.
- 70 Labor will ensure that local labour market needs are met through Registered Employment Authorities, which will include representatives from industry and unions. The Registered Employment Authorities will:
- ensure the scheme is more transparent and will provide advice in high risk cases, Regional Migration Agreements and high risk Labour Agreements on whether applications are consistent with the objectives of the program
 - provide a benefit to Australia and reflect local labour market needs
 - ensure the occupations where skills shortages exist will be identified on a regular basis
 - Labor is committed to establishing a National Jobs Board for the resources sector by July 2012.

- 71 Labor recognises that significant numbers of permanent visas are granted to temporary visa holders already working in Australia. Recognising that a transition to permanent residency status helps move an individual overseas worker onto a more secure footing, where possible, Labor will align the permanent and temporary migration programs to facilitate the conversion of temporary visa holders on to permanent visas and citizenship. Employers will be encouraged to sponsor temporary visa holders for permanent residency where the visa holders are working under successful arrangements and have skills that correspond with those needed in the economy and Australia's migration priorities. However any such transition to permanent residency status should not be automatic. It should be underpinned by a rigorous process of labour market testing to ensure that labour market conditions used to justify the granting of the original temporary visa are still valid.
- 72 Labor will ensure that all Australian employment and industries are regulated under Australian law, including those located on the landward side of the outer limits of the territorial sea of Australia, in the Exclusive Economic Zone, or in the waters above the continental shelf. To this effect, Labor will review the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth) with a view to ensuring that the definition of the 'Migration Zone' encapsulates all offshore Australian employment and industries.

International competitiveness and trade policy

- 73 Labor will secure a solid foundation for Australia's future economic prosperity by ensuring we have the domestic policy settings to compete on the global stage. Labor recognises that Australia's trade success depends on its international competitiveness and that trade policy is integrally linked to our domestic economic performance. Labor is committed to boosting Australia's international competitiveness by:

- rebuilding the skills of our workforce—the skills relevant to Australian export industries
- lifting our innovation, research and development performance
- developing the skills of the future by investing in education and training
- building Australia's national infrastructure and removing structural impediments to trade
- improving the effectiveness of our trade and investment promotion efforts
- better coordinating federal and state government efforts on trade and investment promotion
- rebuilding Australia's export culture.

Labor is committed to opposing low-quality piecemeal trade agreements in favour of fair and transparent, multilateral agreements that are based on widespread consultation, provide for appropriate, minimum and enforceable labour and environmental standards, take account of the social and economic impacts of the agreement and allow for sovereign governments to continue making decisions in the interests of their citizens.

- 74 Australia is committed to building on its long record as an advocate for an open global trading system, because reducing global trade barriers boosts our economic growth, creates more competitive industries and benefits consumers. More trade is a pathway to a high-skill, high-wage future for working Australians. While acknowledging the benefits of global trade, Labor recognises that particularly in the short-term adjustment support is needed for some sectors and workers.
- 75 Labor is committed to ensuring that the benefits of global economic growth are shared—both within Australia and between countries. Australia has directly benefited from our history of trade liberalisation, with those benefits enhanced by domestic measures to address the economic, social and regional effects of structural change in our economy.

- 76 Labor will work to:
- secure a successful conclusion to the Doha Round of world trade talks. Labor will continue to work for an outcome that brings greater certainty to the international trading system and makes real progress for free trade, especially for developing economies
 - provide leadership to the Cairns Group, established by Labor in 1986, in reducing world agricultural subsidies and protection
 - secure substantial reductions in industrial tariffs in other markets and substantial new market openings overseas for Australia's fast-growing services export sector.
- 77 Australia's economic future lies principally with the Asia-Pacific region. Over half of our trade is with nations in the Asia-Pacific. We want to build on these relationships. Labor supports trade and investment liberalisation through the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. APEC, established by Labor in 1989, is pivotal to increasing trade and investment in our region. Labor will ensure APEC is a driver of economic integration in our region and will take an active and strategic approach to its long-term role in the region's economic architecture. Labor believes APEC has a key role to play in promoting economic reform behind the border throughout the Asia-Pacific region and will promote efforts in this area. Labor will also endeavour to strengthen the APEC forum's role in mobilising support for the Doha Round.
- 78 We will pursue our trading interests in other important markets, including in Europe and the US, and seize opportunities in emerging economies around the globe. Labor recognises the growing importance of China and India as markets for Australian exports, including our services. We believe we must diversify our export base to China and India and develop export policies to compete effectively.
- 79 Labor is committed to trade policies that are consistent with Australian values, community views and the interests of developing countries. Labor believes a rules-based system underpinned by core labour standards provides a framework for fairness and equity and is the most effective means to ensure governments around the world do not resort to unsustainable protectionism. Labor will work towards the development of a global trading system for the 21st century that is underpinned by equity and transparency.
- 80 Labor supports the principle of national treatment—that foreign and domestic companies are treated equally under the law. Labor does not support, however, the inclusion of provisions in trade agreements that confer greater legal rights on foreign businesses than those available to domestic businesses. Nor does Labor support the inclusion of provisions that would constrain the ability of the government to make laws on social, environmental and economic matters in circumstances where those laws do not discriminate between domestic and foreign businesses. Labor will not ask this of its trading partners in future trade agreements.
- 81 The past decade has seen a significant increase in non-tariff 'behind borders' trade barriers, particularly in Asia. Such barriers include excise tax arrangements, standards, customs procedures, a wide range of subsidies and other restrictive measures. Australia should produce a biannual report, similar to that of the US Trade Representative, which details these tariff and non-tariff barriers which act as a constraint to Australian and other exporters. The report should become the focus of dialogue between Australia and its trading partners for changes to inappropriate practices and better inform the strategic debate about Australia's trade priorities.
- 82 Labor is committed to comprehensive bilateral free trade agreements where they support Australia's national economic interests and support the multilateral trading system. Labor will also pursue Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) that are consistent with our national social and economic objectives.

- 83 Labor is committed to ensuring regional and bilateral agreements reinforce and support the multilateral trading system. Labor will support regional approaches to trade reform wherever possible, consistent with those principles.
- 84 Labor is committed to sustaining a new depth of transparency into the process of entering trade agreements, by providing full community consultation prior to entering into new trade agreements. Labor will:
- ensure that on commencing negotiations for bilateral or regional FTAs, a document is tabled in both houses of parliament setting our priorities and objectives, including independent assessments of the costs and benefits of any proposals that may be negotiated. This assessment should consider the economic, employment, regional, social, cultural, regulatory and environmental impacts that are expected to arise
 - ensure that during trade negotiations, trade unions and community groups are consulted on draft texts, proposals and requests for review and comment
 - ensure that once the negotiation proposal is complete, a package will be tabled including the proposed treaty together with any legislation required to implement the treaty domestically
 - ensure the positions that a Labor Government takes at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and developments within the WTO are regularly reported to parliament through the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
 - ensure that all Australian submissions and relevant materials to FTAs and the WTO are made public unless there are genuine commercial-in-confidence reasons, or disclosure will damage our national interest
 - review all existing government consultative mechanisms and reconstituting them to ensure they are representative of business, unions, environmental and community interests
 - review the composition of delegations to WTO ministerial meetings, so that they include appropriate representation from business, small business, unions and non-government organisations
 - advance rule changes within the WTO to ensure immediate publication of dispute settlement decisions, together with a short, plain language explanation of the decision.
- 85 Labor supports current WTO rules that allow all nations to determine for themselves: the appropriate public-private mix in their health, education, water and welfare sectors and the distribution of government funding within these sectors, and to protect their cultural industries and procurement and employment policies.
- 86 Labor will vigorously oppose any WTO rules or other trade agreements, interpretations or proposals or other trade agreements that would require Australia to privatise its health, education and welfare sectors, undermine the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, reduce government rights to determine the distribution of government funding within these sectors, or which would require us to remove protection of our cultural industries. Labor will oppose attempts to privatise water services under WTO rules. As part of Australia's forward trade objectives Labor believes that federal, state, territory and local governments should retain the flexibility to implement effective policies to encourage industry development, research and development, regional development and appropriate environmental, employment and procurement standards. Labor will not support the expansion of intellectual property rights, which would extend monopoly patent rights to charge higher prices and would give copyright holders greater rights, at the expense of consumers.

- 87 Labor will not allow trade agreements to limit the capacity of the government to determine immigration policies that promote education and training, permanent rather than temporary migration, local employment and fair employment standards. Labor will ensure that future trade agreements do not prevent Australia effectively regulating temporary migration. Labor will ensure trade agreements promote the recruitment of local labour, and protect the wages and conditions of local workers.
- 88 Labor believes the development assistance Australia provides under the banner of aid-for-trade should be targeted to support developing countries in establishing the skills, infrastructure, regulatory and investment policies that will support sustainable growth in developing countries. We want to deliver practical trade-related capacity building programs that improve the ability of developing nations to export, raise their international competitiveness, and engage with the global economy.
- 89 Labor recognises that trade is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition to promote economic growth in developing countries. We will work to ensure that nations and their communities in our region and throughout the world benefit from open markets and share in global growth. We will promote policies to achieve this in the WTO, through trade agreements, as well as at the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, International Labour Organization (ILO) and other international forums.
- 90 Labor acknowledges the benefit of economic growth in developing countries, while also noting that many developing economies have not seen the equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth. The creation of decent and productive jobs, assists with more equitable economic growth that can free people from hunger and poverty, provide access to economic independence for individuals and support meaningful basic human rights. At the same time economic growth in developing countries brings new markets for Australian exporters, contributing to creating jobs in our country and strengthening our economy.
- 91 Labor recognises that increased international trade brings with it the responsibility to promote higher labour and environmental standards for Australia and internationally. Labor will support greater co-operation between the secretariats of the WTO and the ILO on the issue of trade and enforceable labour standards. Labor supports and promotes the incorporation of core labour standards, as a minimum, in all international trade agreements. Labor will outlaw the importation into Australia of goods or services produced with forced labour and the worst forms of child labour or prison labour. Labor will work actively through the ILO, WTO, other international trade organisations and the implementing mechanisms of bilateral and regional free trade agreements to combat and overcome the scourges of forced, prison and child labour.
- 92 Labor is fully committed to the goal of sustainable development. Labor will work towards the removal of environmentally damaging subsidies, and promote mechanisms that can reconcile the interests of environmental protection and open markets.
- 93 Labor notes the important role and responsibility we have at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and supports the inclusion of core labour standards in ADB decision-making, including the roles monitoring mechanism at the ADB.
- 94 Labor supports the maintenance of anti-dumping measures. Anti-dumping legislation ensures that overseas exporters do not hurt our industry by selling their products in Australia at a lower price than they charge in their home markets.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement

- 95 The Trans-Pacific Partnership offers the prospect of more and better jobs through improved access to member countries' markets for Australian exporting businesses and their employees. Australia's position on the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement must be consistent with the provisions of the National Platform, specifically that it:
- does not undermine the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme
 - provides for national treatment—that foreign and domestic companies are treated equally under the law—while not conferring greater legal rights on foreign businesses than those available to domestic businesses
 - does not require Australia to remove protection of its cultural industries
 - retains the Foreign Investment Review Board and its powers to review foreign investment in the public interest
 - retains legitimate quarantine provisions for reducing the risk of imported pests and diseases
 - retains the flexibility to encourage industry development including through research and development, regional development and appropriate environmental, employment and procurement policies
 - contains enforceable labour clauses that require signatories to enforce the core international Labour organisation standards in the ILO conventions
 - contains enforceable environmental clauses that require signatories to meet all relevant international environmental standards, including those provided for in applicable UN international environmental agreements.

Chapter 3: Building Australia's future

Introduction

- 1 Investment in people, skills and infrastructure is crucial to a strong economy. In the 21st century, successful nations are those with highly skilled workforces and modern, well planned infrastructure. Labor recognises that Australia is an economy in transition, in a world where economic power has shifted dramatically to the Asia-Pacific and where the increase in demand for our resources is unprecedented. Labor understands the importance of infrastructure investment and the need for an activist industry policy to boost productivity and continued economic growth and prosperity.
- 2 Labor has a strong tradition of nation building. Previous Labor governments had the vision to build the transcontinental railway, the Snowy Hydro Electricity Scheme and to invest in massive urban infrastructure that provided sewage and running water to many Australian homes for the first time. More recently, our economic stimulus plan heralded a comprehensive period of nation building that protected jobs and boosted long-term productivity and economic prosperity.
- 3 The Australian economy is diverse and priorities differ across industries and in regional, urban, coastal and remote contexts. Labor understands this diversity and the patchwork nature of the economy and it is reflected in our infrastructure and industry policies. Labor also recognises the critical role of state, territory and local governments in delivering infrastructure and essential services, and in improving productivity right across Australia.
- 4 Labor has always been the party of regional development and investing in the regions. Successive Labor governments have recognised the role of the Commonwealth in regional development and introduced innovative policies to address regional needs. By contrast, Coalition governments have abrogated their responsibility to regional development.
- 5 The Australian economy is also adapting in response to global markets, climate change and new technologies. Labor is committed to managing this change. We are putting innovation, science and research at the centre of our approach to economic and social development. We are investing in training and skills to equip our workforce for the future. Labor is providing the necessary support to ensure that all Australians should have the opportunity to have meaningful work, and recognise that government has a role to play in ensuring this.

Labor values

- 6 We believe the federal government needs to provide leadership in planning and delivering national infrastructure, including transport, water and communications networks. Building world-class infrastructure creates jobs, supports jobs and is the means by which our economy grows.
- 7 Labor believes governments have a responsibility to intervene in the economy to help achieve economic, environmental and social outcomes to address market failure. Labor will intervene where appropriate to advance broader economic, social and regional objectives.
- 8 Labor believes that the support of a well resourced public sector workforce whose rights are respected is fundamental to achieving these objectives. Australians rely on this workforce to deliver quality services and infrastructure that secures our future and as such our investment in their skills, their job security and their rights at work remains a cornerstone of our community and our economy.
- 9 Labor will pursue an industry policy based on supporting innovation and improved competitiveness, supporting jobs in all sectors of the economy, including new clean energy industries. Labor recognises the special competitive challenges facing manufacturing and related service industries. A vibrant manufacturing sector is an essential feature of the economy. Governments have an important role in building the competitiveness of industries and business and increasing their capacity to penetrate markets, gain access to finance, increase employment, innovate, and diversify. Labor will use strategic public and private investment in innovation to grow new industries and transform existing ones.
- 10 Labor is committed to building strong and dynamic regional communities. Regions play a vital role in Australia's economy. Labor is investing in regional Australia and in nation-building infrastructure to enable our regions to prosper. Investment in quality government services, local skills development and a high speed National Broadband Network are vital to our region's economic health. The patchwork nature of our economy also means we must engage the regions. The regions are the patches and by tapping in to their local input, we can make the patches work better. If communities are stronger and more connected at the local level, overall productivity rises at the national level with benefits for regions and the nation. Labor affirms its commitment to utilising the local expertise available in our regions through the structure of Regional Development Australia to deliver leadership on economic development and diversification for their communities.
- 11 Labor recognises the threat posed by climate change. This is particularly acute in regional Australia and for employees and businesses in agriculture, tourism and related industries such as retail and hospitality. Labor is committed to tackling climate change and ensuring support for regional Australia in responding to the challenge of climate change including drought, increased adverse weather events and environmental degradation. Labor recognises that in protecting our communities, well resourced and maintained emergency services are necessary in protecting our communities.
- 12 Labor supports the continued development of Australia's natural resources through a competitive minerals, resources and energy industry, which can create export-oriented jobs for our modern economy. Labor believes that agriculture and fisheries industries will continue to contribute a large share of export revenue and economic activity in regional and rural Australian communities, and that these industries must be supported as they adapt to climate change and shifts in global markets.
- 13 Labor believes that government has a key role to play in infrastructure financing and provision, and also in providing the forward planning of projects for well-managed private sector investment, and providing a framework through which superannuation funds can make long-term infrastructure investment. Labor supports working in partnership with the private sector in the provision of infrastructure and services where this represents good value to the Australian community.

- 14 Labor is committed to lifting Australia's competitiveness, so that more people buy Australian goods and services, both at home and abroad. Labor believes that maximising Australian industry participation in domestic and international projects is critical to supporting and creating Australian jobs. Labor's aim is to capitalise on the steps it has already taken to boost Australian industry participation, including:
- increasing support for the Industry Capability Network through the Supplier Access to Major Projects program
 - appointing Supplier Advocates to champion Australian industry in the government marketplace and improve competitiveness
 - requiring all firms bidding for major Commonwealth contracts and work on major Commonwealth-funded infrastructure projects to submit Australian Industry Participation Plans
 - applying more comprehensive monitoring and accountability criteria and transparency arrangements for firms accessing duty free imports through the Enhanced Project By-law scheme to ensure opportunities are being made available to Australian industry
 - requiring project proponents to list details of opportunities for Australian industry to participate in major for Enhanced Project By-law scheme projects greater than \$500 million
 - requiring accountability, auditing and public reporting against the success of Australian Industry Participation Plans encourage state governments to consider industry participation, manufacturing and Australian content as part of the approvals processes of resources projects.
- 15 Labor is committed to the pursuit of progress in science, industry and technology. Labor believes in the power of ideas to transform our nation for a richer, fairer and greener future. We turn to science and research to understand the world, and to help it change. We need new ideas to meet emerging challenges and pursue new opportunities with confidence. We seek to harness new technologies for the benefit of all Australians.
- 16 Labor is a social democratic party and believes in activist government. We seek to transform our economy, business by business, and region by region, through science and innovation. Government and industry must be co-investors in the jobs and opportunities of the future. Assistance to industry and business will be structured to achieve clear employment, training, research, innovation, local content and export objectives. Labor builds partnerships that turn research into results. We believe that universities and research agencies must be responsive to the communities that sustain them. The business community must share responsibility for the strength of the knowledge assets they harness. Government must broker the partnership, and help to bridge the cultural and practical divides between the laboratory and the factory floor.
- 17 Labor helps provide the tools for breakthrough discovery. We know that government has a significant role to play in building and providing access to world-class research infrastructure. Australians will reap the maximum benefit from the efforts of our scientists and researchers if we provide them with the best infrastructure we can afford.
- 18 Labor defends the integrity and independence of research. We recognise that science and research must be free of commercial influence and political interference. The rigorous application of the scientific method and scholarly debate is essential to ensure public confidence in the discoveries of our scientists and researchers. We value universities as repositories of knowledge, havens for advanced learning, sites of groundbreaking research and hubs of community engagement.

Labor achievements

Infrastructure reform and investment

We have:

- established the NBN, which will transform our commercial, education and social communication
- restored national leadership and created Infrastructure Australia to undertake long-term planning and evaluate infrastructure proposals
- set up a Major Cities Unit, which is driving forward our National Urban Plan that will improve productivity, sustainability and liveability
- established the \$37 billion, six-year Nation Building Program to modernise the nation's road and rail infrastructure, lower transport costs, improve productivity, tackle the rising cost of urban congestion and cut travel times
- delivered the Nation Building Plan—more than 44,000 nation-building infrastructure projects, which are supporting jobs today while building a platform for future growth, including major investments in transport, housing, clean energy and the largest school modernisation program in Australia's history
- developed Australia's first ever comprehensive national aviation policy statement—the Aviation White Paper—which provides a blueprint for growth while maintaining the highest safety and security standards and addressing community needs
- announced the most comprehensive package of reforms to the Australian shipping industry ever undertaken, including a zero tax rate for Australian ship operators. These reforms will improve productivity and ensure the safety and security of our marine environment for future generations
- improved road safety at hundreds of dangerous black spots and rail crossings and added rest stops for heavy vehicles
- boosted export performance by investing in rail and port infrastructure to reduce freight times and remove bottlenecks facilitating more efficient movement of goods and increasing productivity
- supported local communities by completing over 3000 local community infrastructure projects, such as playgrounds, libraries and community halls.

Regional, remote and local communities

We have:

- doubled funding for roads and increased investment in rail ten-fold
- invested \$1.8 billion to provide critical infrastructure upgrades to hospitals and health services for regional Australians
- invested \$109.9 million for universities with regional campuses through increased and better targeted loading payments to regional areas
- provided \$916 million for the first projects under the Regional Infrastructure Fund to help unlock the economic potential of our regions
- commenced the Farming for our Future program so that farming communities can better manage the impact of climate change
- increased funding for the remote air services and aerodromes to ensure that these communities can have access to the Royal Flying Doctor Service and other basic services such as mail deliveries and fresh food

- improved port access transport networks to ensure more products and produce are delivered from remote mines and farms to Australia's export markets
- invested record funding in regional and inter-state rail networks to better link remote communities with major regional centres and capital cities
- established the Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, responsible to a senior Cabinet Minister
- established a House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia allowing Members to inquire into the needs and resourcing of our regions and the impact of legislation on regional communities
- established a dedicated Cabinet committee for Regional Australia and Regional Development
- revitalised and strengthened the nation's network of 55 Regional Development Australia (RDA) committees. The work of the committee is supported through the newly established Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government with \$20 million of new funding in addition to the \$15 million of existing expenditure
- commenced delivering on regional investment through an almost \$1 billion investment in the Regional Development Australia Fund
- assisted Australians moving to regional Australia by providing \$1.7 million towards the Velocities campaign that helps people to relocate to regional Australia and will drive growth now and into the future
- increased funding for Tasmanian island communities through the Bass Strait Freight Equalisation Scheme
- delivered a landmark agreement that will provide certainty for Tasmania's forestry industry and protect the state's ancient forests
- invested record funding in local government in remote areas to deliver better municipal services, community facilities and remote roads
- made significant investments in northern Australia and laid out the policy foundations to enable sustainable development in the longer term, including:
 - committing record funding to upgrade transport infrastructure in north Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory
 - signing a National Partnership Agreement in 2009 with the Western Australian Government to implement the East Kimberley Development Package. This package included \$195 million to support economic development in the East Kimberley through investment focused on social and common use infrastructure
 - committing funding as part of the Ord Stage 2 development in the East Kimberley to address social and economic disadvantage in the region
 - investing in community infrastructure in northern Australia through the Better Regions and the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Programs
 - investing in housing, education and social infrastructure in Indigenous communities in northern Australia to address disadvantage
 - establishing the Office of Northern Australia to provide high level advice about priorities and strategies that promote sustainable development and barriers impeding the development of significant initiatives in northern Australia
 - reforming and reconvening the Northern Land and Water Taskforce, an independent group of Australian experts to examine the potential for new developments in northern Australia that rely on significant local or regional water resources and identify opportunities for further development

- undertaking the first national infrastructure audit to identify backlogs and under-utilisation of infrastructure, including in northern Australia
- publishing a statistical compendium of data relating to northern Australia, which covers population, the economy and workforce, social conditions, transport, infrastructure, climate, land use and industry
- committing \$6 million to the Northern Australia Sustainable Futures program as a response to the final report of the Northern Australia Land and Water Taskforce
- taking a whole-of-government approach to a strategic infrastructure plan for the region that will underpin economic development and economic diversification across northern Australia.

Industry policy

We have:

- established the Buy Australia at Home and Abroad program, to provide better linkages between major resource projects and Australian firms
- developed a Minerals Resource Rent Tax to maximise the benefits to all Australians flowing from the increased need for Australian resources arising chiefly from the increased demand for infrastructure in rapidly developing economies
- established a single, national petroleum regulator to improve regulation across the sector
- established the National Radiation Dose Register and the National Mine Safety Framework. The Labor Government places the highest priority on worker safety, particularly miner worker safety.
- committed to cut the company tax for incorporated business in 2012–13 and depreciation changes for cars and assets that will improve cash flow for small business.

Labor priorities

A national infrastructure agenda

- 19 Labor believes that investment in infrastructure can play an important role in generating jobs and economic activity during the global downturn, while also providing a foundation for economic recovery. Labor has established a policy framework to allow for long-term planning of Australian infrastructure needs. This framework includes identifying, prioritising and redressing inadequacies in Australia's nationally significant infrastructure, as well as undertaking appropriate regulatory reform to ensure efficient use of infrastructure and to remove obstacles to infrastructure planning, financing and delivery.
- 20 Labor will continue to provide the leadership and coordination required to ensure adequate investment is made in Australia's infrastructure, and that infrastructure priorities are delivered. Labor's national infrastructure policies will be shaped by:
 - the work of Infrastructure Australia, which is driving the development of a long term coordinated national approach to infrastructure planning and investment
 - financing through the Building Australia Fund, which will provide an ongoing investment fund for the development of nationally significant infrastructure
 - a new national evidence-based approach to identifying and prioritising nationally significant transport, water, energy and communications infrastructure

- the development of a pipeline of projects through the National Infrastructure Priority List and National Audit of significant infrastructure
- the targeting of key areas requiring regulatory and governance reform to improve the utilisation of existing infrastructure
- an acknowledgment of the rapid growth of cities and towns outside the capitals, and the increasing decentralisation of the population, particularly in Queensland, and the challenges, for the provision of infrastructure, that those circumstances will cause.

21 A crucial plank in lifting Australia's productivity is continuing to invest in economically productive infrastructure. Labor is committed to strengthening Infrastructure Australia to develop long-term strategies to tackle infrastructure bottlenecks, improve our vital freight networks, and promote private funding of domestic infrastructure by investors like superannuation funds.

22 Labor supports Infrastructure Australia's ongoing responsibility for maintaining a strategic blueprint for our infrastructure needs, in partnership with all spheres of government, the private sector, unions and the community. Infrastructure Australia will continue to develop updated national Infrastructure Priority Lists to assist the public and private sectors to plan future infrastructure investments. Prioritisation will also assist the implementation of regulatory reforms to ensure policy settings are structured to remove barriers to the planning, financing and delivery of infrastructure. Infrastructure Australia will also provide guidance on the most appropriate procurement method for infrastructure projects.

23 Labor will take into account a range of considerations when determining what constitutes good value for money, not just purchase price. Agencies will not be forced to choose the cheapest suppliers when this would have detrimental social or environmental effects. Agencies will be required to consider all direct and indirect benefits and costs over the whole life of each product and service, along with the performance history of each prospective supplier. Labor will establish Fair Work Principles to ensure that procurement decisions are consistent with the Fair Work Act. Labor will introduce a requirement that supplies and their contractors comply with the Fair Work Principles.

24 The most appropriate financing instruments will be determined on a case by case basis ensuring value for money is preserved. This process will include, but not be limited to:

- a rigorous and publicly transparent public sector comparator that accurately reflects risks
- allowance for all the costs of different procurement methods
- ensuring that employee pay and conditions are not the differentiating factor between options
- high levels of transparency and accountability.

25 Labor will take an integrated, cross-modal approach to infrastructure, treating our infrastructure as a network rather than a collection of individual projects. This will require aligning, planning, regulation, financing and delivery of infrastructure.

26 Labor will continue to facilitate the development of nationally significant infrastructure using the most appropriate financing instruments. It will continue to be necessary for some infrastructure to be jointly procured by government and the private sector. Labor believes government has a key role to play in infrastructure financing and provision and also in providing the forward planning of projects for well-managed private sector investment, and a framework through which superannuation funds can make long-term infrastructure investment. Labor will work in partnership with the private sector in the provision of infrastructure and services where this represents good value to the Australian community.

- 27 Labor recognises that Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) have a legitimate role to play in financing infrastructure. Labor believes that PPP policy and guidelines should be nationally consistent and provide for best practice infrastructure provision, and best practice employment standards. Labor recognises that PPPs will not be the most suitable funding mechanism for many infrastructure projects and that risk should be considered on a case by case basis. Labor believes PPPs should only be used where they represent value for money, and that risk should be allocated to the party best able to manage it. Regardless of the source of capital, Labor will ensure that its fair employment principles extend to the builders and operators of projects built using PPPs.
- 28 The capital required to meet our infrastructure needs will be met from a mix of public and private sources. Labor will work with the superannuation industry, particularly industry super funds, to harness the retirement savings of Australia's workforce to build our infrastructure, and provide stable investment returns for their members. Labor will allocate a share of future surpluses to the \$12.6 Billion Building Australia Fund, to provide a stable funding pool to invest in our critical infrastructure needs. Labor will initiate a review of the mechanisms that support the dual objective of superannuation investment in priority infrastructure and supporting sustainable outcomes for superannuation members.

Completing the National Broadband Network

- 29 Labor understands that the big drivers of productivity are key investments in quality infrastructure, a skilled workforce and the ability to innovate and capture new opportunities. Few investments will bring us a greater economic return than broadband. That's why Labor has put the National Broadband Network and our Digital Economy Strategy at the heart of our policy program.
- 30 Labor is the nation-building party. Just like the Snowy Mountains Scheme, we are committed to building the infrastructure of the future. The NBN is transformative infrastructure that will pay for itself over time and unlock opportunities of the digital economy not yet even imagined.
- 31 Labor values are about giving people the opportunity to get ahead. They're also about making sure no one gets left behind. Under Labor, no community in Australia will be without access to high-speed broadband. Every home, school, hospital and business will receive high-speed broadband via the NBN—no one will miss out.
- 32 Under Labor, 93 per cent of Australian premises will have access to a high-speed fibre network capable of providing broadband speeds of up to one gigabit per second. The remaining seven per cent of premises will have access to next-generation fixed wireless and satellite technologies providing peak speeds of 12 megabits per second.
- 33 Labor understands the power that the NBN brings to communities across the country—to bridge the digital divide, to provide better educational outcomes, to improve health service delivery and increase economic opportunities. This is what Labor offers now and what we can offer into the future, thanks to the rollout of the NBN.
- 34 Labor appreciates that broadband is an economic game-changer. A Deloitte-Access Economics Report released mid-2011 estimated that the internet contributes around \$50 billion a year or 3.6 per cent of Australia's GDP, the equivalent size of our agriculture industry. That's why we're determined to deliver the NBN and realise its potential through our National Digital Economy Strategy. The possibilities are endless and truly global. Through the NBN, Labor is creating the jobs of today, tomorrow and well into the future.

- 35 Labor supports fair and equitable access to services and infrastructure for Australians in regional and remote communities. We're committed to delivering uniform wholesale national pricing within technologies; a universal price for all customers receiving optic fibre, a universal price for all customers receiving fixed wireless, and a universal price for all customers receiving satellite. Uniform national wholesale pricing will help break down the tyranny of distance and bridge the digital divide, providing fairer outcomes for families in regional, rural and remote Australia.
- 36 Labor understands that distance brings unique challenges to Australia's regional and remote communities. We recognise the vital role of telecommunications in supporting regional sustainability, economic development and prosperity. Labor is committed to delivering increased backhaul competition, lower broadband prices and better services for our communities in regional and rural Australia.
- 37 Labor is delivering important microeconomic reform to our telecommunications sector, reforms that will ensure a level-playing field in telecommunications, driving genuine competition at the retail level.
- 38 Labor believes in a strong regulatory framework for telecommunications. Labor is delivering a regulatory environment that promotes enhanced consumer safeguards, greater retail competition and better services for families and businesses.

Developing Australia's cities

- 39 Labor believes there is a distinct role for the national government in leading and coordinating urban development. The failure to invest in Australia's cities in the past has hindered economic development and undermined social cohesion. Australia relies heavily on the productivity of its cities for national prosperity. The majority of Australia's population and businesses are located in urban areas and our cities are hubs of economic activity that link Australia to the global economy. Labor recognises that rapid growth and development has imposed challenges such as patterns of growth, water supply, urban congestion, climate change and adaptation.
- 40 Labor is delivering new urban development policies through a Major Cities Unit. This coordinated and integrated approach to urban policy development will improve the productivity, sustainability and liveability of major cities in Australia.
- 41 Labor is working with and across all spheres of government, the private sector and the community to improve governance structures and develop integrated long term strategies to better manage land use planning, housing affordability, settlement patterns, climate change and urban congestion.
- 42 The Sustainable Communities package aims to improve the planning and design of our cities and make more efficient use of new and existing infrastructure. The outer suburbs of our capital cities and major regional centres in particular are experiencing population growth pressures and housing and transport affordability pressures. New programs will deliver demonstration projects within capital cities and regional cities that drive urban renewal by:
- investment in capital projects that improve public transport services and support new local jobs
 - working in partnership with the capital city Lord Mayors on demonstration projects that enhance the liveability and sustainability of our capital cities
 - funding capital projects that support urban development or renewal, reduce costs and improve access to transport
 - more efficient and effective use of new and existing infrastructure through smart technology
 - showing how new investments in community facilities and better planning can help improve quality of life in our outer and growth suburbs
 - funding projects in outer suburbs and major regional cities that meet the Council of Australian Governments national criteria and promote improved housing and transport supply.

- 43 Labor is also investing in making our cities more liveable, through design or capital work projects. We are supporting state, territory and local governments to plan and provide for employment precincts, manufacturing hubs and multi-function developments close to residential areas, to reduce travel times to work and services.
- 44 The rapid growth of our cities, as well as the outward expansion of cities over the last 50 years, has created significant congestion on urban roads, which has had an impact on quality of life and reduced family and social time. Labor believes that safe, clean and efficient public transport in our major cities is critical to addressing the economic, environmental and social problem of urban congestion. Managed motorways can be effective in improving productivity by reducing congestion on busy roads, and deliver important sustainability and liveability outcomes from our transport network. Labor is investing in the development of a national smart managed motorways trial to ease congestion, lower urban emissions, and expand the capacity of existing outer city road infrastructure networks.
- 45 Well targeted, high quality investment in infrastructure is vital to lift the productivity of our cities. New measures to encourage increased private sector participation and investment in our nation's infrastructure are being put in place. The Infrastructure Investment and Financing Reforms package of measures will improve the quality of infrastructure development and private sector opportunities to invest in infrastructure, including in urban areas.
- 46 Labor is committed to making our cities more productive, sustainable and liveable into the future. Labor will provide national leadership by working with state, territory and local governments and the private sector to deliver the infrastructure and services our urban communities need to thrive and prosper.

Strengthening regional and remote Australia

- 47 Australia's regional communities, from large regional cities and towns through to remote communities, coastal and inland, are central to our national identity and integral to our economic prosperity. Regional Australia needs the support of a nation-building government, committed to providing modern infrastructure and quality services, and ensuring decent standards for working Australians and families in regional centres and more isolated communities throughout our nation.
- 48 Labor is committed to engaging with regional communities to develop evidence-based policies, undertake practical regional planning and ensure that national policies achieve desired outcomes. While Labor maintains that regional development should be part of mainstream policy, it will retain regional-specific programs. Labor will ensure transparency and accountability in the delivery of these programs.
- 49 Labor is committed to enabling regional communities to reach their full potential and become more resilient, more viable, more sustainable and more prosperous. Labor commits to ensuring regional communities have physical access to essential government services. If regions are stronger and more connected at the local level, overall productivity rises at the national level. Labor has put in place programs and mechanisms to enable local communities to connect across all three levels of government and develop creative local solutions to local issues.
- 50 Labor recognises that distance brings unique challenges to Australia's remote communities, particularly access to basic services such as food, shelter, education, health care, communications and transportation.

- 51 Regional communities face unique challenges arising from the mining boom, global economic changes, population movements, the disproportionate effects of climate change and limited access to adequate levels of care and support.
- 52 Labor supports equitable access to services and infrastructure for Australians in remote communities, and will work with remote communities and industries to maximise their economic potential.
- 53 Labor will fund programs and implement policies to ensure government delivers practical improvements for remote communities and increase the economic contribution that remote communities make to the nation.
- 54 Labor recognises the diverse range of needs and issues facing this nation's regions. Coastal communities face different challenges to inland regions and solutions are not possible within a single policy approach.
- 55 Labor is committed to continue to work with regional communities to address these challenges, develop practical local solutions and ensure that living in regional and remote Australia can continue to provide a high quality of life for Australians.
- 56 Labor believes that Australia's regions are not only important drivers of our national economy but they are also a source of social and cultural diversity. In order for regional communities to continue making a vital contribution to the nation, they must remain strong and sustainable. Where there is demonstrable need for labour and skills by new arrivals they will be encouraged to settle in such areas.
- 57 Labor recognises that a strong community is underpinned by a stable economic and income base, reasonable physical infrastructure such as roads, telecommunications, and water infrastructure, social infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, community facilities, and good access to health and community services. It also recognises that as key drivers of regional economies, sectors such as agriculture, tourism and retail are interdependent, and require a whole of economy approach to regional development and cross sector policies across government agencies.
- 58 Labor believes that all Australians, regardless of where they live, or where they come from, should have reasonable and affordable access to services including:
- secure and appropriate housing
 - transport
 - basic utilities
 - universal and affordable broadband facilities and mobile access
 - quality education and training opportunities
 - health and aged care
 - financial services
 - personal, family and social services
 - employment services
 - emergency services
 - information on government programs and policies.
- 59 With these basic foundations in place, individuals within regional communities are better able to form social bonds, contribute to their community and the nation's prosperity and to make plans about their future and their children's future.

- 60 Labor recognises that all three levels of government are essential in developing Australia's regions. Labor will provide the national leadership necessary to work with state, territory and local governments to implement targeted strategies and policies in regional Australia. These will include the development of local industry and employment opportunities, access to education, health, housing and community support services, and improved transport links.
- 61 The use of fly-in fly-out workforces or drive-in drive-out workforces presents particular challenges for some areas in regional Australia. Labor recognises that these communities have specific infrastructure, housing and service needs. Labor is committed to improving data collection in these communities to ascertain the extent of these needs and has referred to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia an inquiry into these workforce practices in regional Australia.
- 62 Labor will seek to ensure that rapidly increasing rental costs and other costs of living do not deprive local communities of having locally-based professionals, service industry workers and others not directly employed in mining and resources occupations. Housing affordability and liveability are important considerations in ensuring that growth is sustainable.
- 63 Labor has revitalised and strengthened the Regional Development Australia network of local advisory committees to engage with regional communities and local and state government. The local RDA committees find ways to address the economic, social and environmental needs of each region. They provide local input and strategic advice to all levels of government on the needs of regional communities. Labor is committed to ensuring that Regional Development Australia committees operate in a transparent and accountable manner and are representative of their communities, working closely with state and local governments. To be representative of these communities, the committees must include, for each community falling within their geographic area, persons who are genuinely local, and who have a commitment to realising the opportunities for their region through effective engagement.
- 64 Labor is establishing the \$6 billion Regional Infrastructure Fund linked to the Mineral Resource Rent Tax to help build transport and local infrastructure in communities affected by the mining boom. This will ensure Australians get their fair share of infrastructure investment and a fair return on Australia's mineral wealth.
- 65 Labor will work to enable regions to broaden their traditional economic base—through new partnerships, new skills and new technologies. In this way, communities will become more resilient, more viable and more sustainable in the longer term.
- 66 Labor understands a collaborative approach to regional development that involves all levels of government, the private sector and local communities, will produce the best solutions and outcomes. Strong local engagement will ensure that local employment services are tailored to local job seekers, local skills meet the needs of local employers, and local communities can access the opportunities that better infrastructure, such as the NBN, will create.
- 67 Labor remains committed to embedding regionalism into the way we govern. Regional communities see the opportunities ahead as we embrace the challenges and possibilities ahead. Labor is determined to stand with them and ensure they remain well positioned to meet the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

Local government

- 68 Labor recognises that local government is the level of government closest to the community.
- 69 The role of local government has evolved beyond the traditional municipal and road services to delivering:
- social services such as childcare, aged care, affordable housing and health services
 - environmental services such as coastal management, improved waste management, energy efficiency, and improved catchment and water resources management
 - community infrastructure such as sports grounds, swimming pools, community centres and tourism facilities
 - regional planning and economic development strategies.
- 70 Labor is committed to a new partnership with local government to improve the provision of services and infrastructure for local communities. During the GFC Labor was determined to ensure our nation's economic stability so it called on local government to assist by providing shovel-ready projects under programs including the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program. Local government was able to deliver hundreds of projects across the nation, building essential local infrastructure and reinforcing our economy.
- 71 Labor will continue to build on policies to assist local government such as:
- providing record funding through the ongoing Financial Assistance Grants—a program begun by Labor in 1974–75
 - increasing funding for local government-maintained roads through the Roads to Recovery program
 - establishing the first Australian Council of Local Government to consult and engage directly with local government
 - ensuring local government has a voice within Infrastructure Australia and is represented consistently across the Regional Development Australia network
 - participate in a range of programs to provide direct funding to local government.
- 72 Labor will work with local government to consider policies that help make our urban and regional communities more liveable and productive, including urban and regional planning, development assessment and approval processes.
- 73 Labor will promote the role of local government in national and local environmental strategies, such as natural resource management, climate change, water management and natural disasters.
- 74 Labor acknowledges the need for greater local government involvement in pursuing employment and training opportunities, in partnership with other spheres of government, unions, business and regional organisations.
- 75 Labor understands that rising costs and increasing demand for local services have affected the financial sustainability of local governments, in particular, many remote, regional and outer suburban local governments.
- 76 While recognising that Labor is delivering record funding for regional development, we will continue to work with local government to improve efficiency and financial sustainability. We also acknowledge the effectiveness of local government in delivering programs in the interests of local communities.

- 77 Labor will work with local government to achieve best practice in the development, management and maintenance of infrastructure, particularly through asset and financial management frameworks.
- 78 Labor will work with local government to promote collaboration and shared services between councils and with industry skills councils to secure the necessary skills for quality public service in local government.
- 79 Labor will work with local government to build its skills for the future needs of the community including through programs that encourage councils to directly employ and retain employees apprenticeships and trainees.
- 80 Women's representation on local government—as Mayors, Councillors, and General Managers—is unacceptably low. In fact the representation of women in local government is poorer than every other level of government. Labor is committed to working with local government to develop and implement strategies to increase participation by women and Indigenous people in all aspects of local government.
- 81 Labor supports the recognition of local government in the Australian Constitution. Just like the Whitlam and Hawke governments, Labor believes in recognising local government in the nation's foundation document and has appointed an independent expert panel to progress this important issue.

External territories

- 82 Labor recognises the need for special arrangements between the Commonwealth and the External Territories that are tailored to the particular needs and circumstances of each territory.
- 83 Labor is committed to the good governance of all territories through the maintenance and improvement of the legislative framework for self-governing territories and laws and services for the non self-governing territories.
- 84 Labor believes that the potential of our External Territories and their people will be best realised when they have access to:
- fair and equitable opportunities similar to that in Australian states and mainland territories
 - a diversified economy that recognises the diverse strengths of the populations and environments
 - appropriate economic, social and cultural development strategies addressing the needs and circumstances of each territory
 - governance arrangements that are equitable, fair, sustainable and reflect the islanders' desire for real decision making power and responsibility and a level of autonomy.

Northern Australia

- 85 Labor believes that northern Australia, identified as that part of Australia north of the Tropic of Capricorn, makes a vital contribution to the national economy, particularly through its resources, agriculture and tourism industries.
- 86 Labor recognises the rich diversity of northern Australian communities as well as its unique and fragile natural environment.
- 87 Labor understands that through distance and decades of under-investment, northern Australia has significant social and economic infrastructure needs.

- 88 Labor believes in encouraging development in northern Australia in a sustainable manner that protects the region's natural environment and its many social and cultural assets while harnessing its potential.
- 89 In addition to recent major investments in northern Australia, Labor will address ongoing infrastructure bottlenecks to remove obstacles for future investment.
- 90 Labor will work with Indigenous communities in northern Australia to tackle systemic disadvantage and ensure access to quality education, housing and basic services, and enable Indigenous Australians to take advantage of employment opportunities.
- 91 Labor will work with relevant state and territory governments, industry, local government and the community to identify further opportunities for investment in northern Australia.
- 92 Labor will take steps to ensure that the natural environment and heritage are protected, and water resources are used sustainably in future development in northern Australia.

Increasing productivity and opportunity

- 93 Transforming Australia's economy and producing sustainable prosperity requires higher participation, better skills and major industrial innovation. This means we need to invest in people and infrastructure to improve the productive capacity of the economy. Jobs and job security is a key to personal and social wellbeing, to stable family life and strong communities. In particular, Labor is committed to maximising the opportunity for Australians to be employed in secure, high-wage, high-skill jobs.
- 94 Labor believes the dignity and purpose of work should be extended to more Australians. We are committed to delivering new jobs and good quality jobs. At a time when many other developed countries are struggling, the strength of our economy makes it possible for more Australians to participate in the workforce. With unemployment at nearly half that of most developed economies and a huge flow of mining investment supporting economic growth and demand for skills and labour, full employment is a realistic goal, and a Labor goal.
- 95 Labor's agenda for high-quality jobs includes support for a strong manufacturing industry in Australia. We know that a modern manufacturing sector will be driven by a national innovation system, groundbreaking science and technical research, international competitiveness for value-added products and greater productivity. We know that times are tough in the manufacturing sector but are committed to supporting jobs with active industry and sectoral policies.
- 96 Labor is also committed to investing in the drivers of economic progress and productivity by putting innovation, science and research at the heart of our industry policy. Labor sees a vibrant future for manufacturing, the services sector and small businesses. This requires government and industry to work together as we make the transition to a clean energy future and meet the challenges of our patchwork economy.
- 97 Increasing participation is an economic and a social challenge. We know parts of our patchwork economy are struggling. We know Australia is an economy in transition, adapting to new global and domestic skill demands. We also know that some people have been out of work for an extended period, or have a disability or are caring for children or relatives—all of which can make getting or keeping work difficult. We want to create greater opportunity and require greater responsibility in return. We are introducing new rewards, opportunities and responsibilities for key groups with low participation, including improved financial incentives for single parents and Youth Allowance recipients.

- 98 Labor is introducing new measures to increase workforce participation and improve skills. These include:
- investing \$3 billion in a major new skills initiative, including 130,000 new training places
 - strengthening our apprenticeship system so progress is based on skills acquired rather than time served and mentoring 40,000 apprentices to drive completions
 - allowing aged pensioners to earn more without an impact on their pension
 - uncapping university places, which will deliver a 20 per cent increase in the number of funded places
 - delivering a tax cut for people on incomes of up to \$80,000 from 1 July 2012 and improving incentives to work by delivering a tax cut of at least \$300 to 60 per cent of taxpayers
 - tripling the tax-free threshold from 1 July 2012, from \$6000 to \$18,200, meaning that up to one million people will no longer have to lodge a tax return
 - making sure more than 6.5 million low-income earners get more in their pay packets, rather than having to wait until the end of the year
 - reducing effective tax rates for 50,000 single parents who work part-time
 - targeting wage subsidies for the very long term unemployed
 - creating more opportunities for people with disability, through additional wage subsidies and allowing Disability Support Pension recipients to earn more before their pension is affected
 - introducing new approaches in areas of entrenched disadvantage.
- 99 Labor believes education and training is the bedrock of increased social mobility in Australia. Through acquiring knowledge and skills, our citizens can improve their work opportunities and their living standards, and contribute to a more prosperous, productive Australia.
- 100 Our Building Australia's Future Workforce package is putting industry at the heart of the training effort to help meet emerging skills shortages. Central to this package is a National Workforce Development Fund that will deliver around 130,000 high-quality training places directly tailored to industry needs. The training will require co-investment from industry, recognising the shared responsibility for training between the government and industry.
- 101 The fund will be supported by the establishment of a new National Workforce and Productivity Agency. The agency will work closely with industry to identify skills needs and build a more skilled and capable workforce.
- 102 Labor has a fresh vision for skills—a high-quality and responsive training system that meets the longer term labour demand needs and sustains economy growth. Labor is setting tougher new reform standards through the National Agreements for Skills and Workforce Development. This will include increasing the focus on higher level training and aligning effort with economic needs.
- 103 We are also investing in a smarter apprenticeship scheme that works for more Australians. While many Australians start an apprenticeship, less than half of those complete them. Labor is providing support for mentoring, progression and completions. An expansion of the Apprenticeship Access Program will also assist vulnerable job seekers to take on an apprenticeship. Labor is also investing in services to improve the basic employment skills of jobs seekers, which will provide 30,000 additional places in the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program.

- 104 Labor has also committed to delivering:
- updated apprenticeships—with \$101 million in funding to mentor apprentices and changes to the system to let apprentices progress as their skills increase, rather than time served
 - more funding for language, literacy and numeracy, to help 30,000 job seekers with 800 hours of free language and numeracy training—to help get a job in a high skilled economy
 - reforms to make work pay for jobseekers with a disability and single parents, by allowing them to keep more of their payment if they work more
 - removing the incentive for young people to go on the welfare system early—because we believe they should either be learning or earning
 - funding wage subsidies for the long-term unemployed and disabled—along with extending work experience and work for the dole to 11 out of 12 months of the year for those who have not worked for more than two years.
- 105 Labor has stood shoulder to shoulder with industry for generations, recognising the need to constantly remake our strengths. Labor delivered highly successful sectoral plans in the 1980s and 1990s for automotive manufacturing, steelmaking, shipbuilding, pharmaceuticals and other industries, which continue to deliver returns today. Groundbreaking Labor initiatives, including the Research and Development Tax Incentive, the Cooperative Research Centres Program and the Rural Research and Development Corporations, have been replicated across the world. These measures have been modernised and strengthened to remain at the core of our 21st century innovation agenda.
- 106 Labor has carried that legacy forward through the creation of a new portfolio, uniting federal resources in science, research, industry and innovation. We recognise and respond to the complexity of the innovation journey, from an idea to a commercial return or a new way of doing business.
- 107 Labor developed Powering Ideas, a ten-year innovation strategy for Australia, and has boosted investment in science, research and innovation to new record levels for four successive budgets.
- 108 Labor supported industry through the GFC and with an appropriate stimulus and tax measures, minimised employment losses and maintained important manufacturing capabilities.
- 109 The introduction of the new Research and Development Tax Incentive, in the form of a credit, will give businesses at all stages of the development cycle the encouragement to innovate. It is a generous, flexible and inclusive mechanism, fit for the needs of modern business. Small to medium businesses, the engine of innovation in the knowledge economy, will be able to receive their tax credit each quarter. It will encourage global partners to plan their research investment strategies around Australian affiliates and research institutions.
- 110 Labor is also providing support for our businesses of the future through Commercialisation Australia, a merit-based competitive assistance program to help innovative businesses take new products to market.
- 111 Labor has established Industry Innovation Councils and Supplier Advocates for strategic industries, helping to plan and lead their transformation and link firms with new opportunities in local and overseas markets.
- 112 Labor will continue to deliver major investment packages to transform the automotive and Textile, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) sectors. Labor attracted new investment in the automotive industry during the GFC with the New Car Plan for a Greener Future, which has resulted in local production of hybrid vehicles and a new engine plant at Toyota, new small car by Holden and adoption of new fuel efficiency technologies at Ford. Labor consolidated the supply chain and introduced improved competitiveness and further. The TCF Strategic Capability Program is supporting innovation in the TCF industries.

- 113 Labor has ensured Australian firms get a fair chance to compete for government procurement opportunities, through the Australian Industry Participation framework. Australian Industry Participation plans are now required for a broad array of Commonwealth investments, which have so far reached a combined total in excess of \$2.8 billion. The new \$50 million Buy Australian at Home and Abroad initiative provides further support for local manufacturers to link into opportunities in the resources sector, by improving support for small and medium enterprises and increasing the number of supplier advocates. The package includes:
- boosting our science and research capabilities and reinforcing partnerships with industry
 - appointing a Resources Sector Envoy and new Supplier Advocates to promote local capabilities and identify opportunities for Australian industry
 - boosting the national Enterprise Connect network to give small and medium enterprises in the manufacturing sector the skills and knowledge to integrate into global supply chains
 - embedding an industry capability specialist within major projects in the resources sector to ensure that Australian manufacturers are given fair consideration
 - convening a Resource Sector Supplier Advisory Forum to bring government, industry and major project proponents together, building local capability and developing markets.
- 114 Labor is encouraging the development of a sustainable Australian venture capital market to assist emerging high-tech businesses through the high-risk stages of development.
- 115 Labor has paved the way for the introduction of an emissions trading scheme with the Clean Business Australia and Clean 21 programs, that stimulated investment in new technologies and products and practices in the manufacturing and commercial building sectors.
- 116 Labor is lowering and simplifying small business taxes by allowing instant write off for all assets costing less than \$5,000. The government is also introducing from 2012–13 an early reduction in the company tax rate to 29 per cent to allow small business companies to reinvest and grow. The government is also introducing additional tax benefits, including new depreciation rules for motor vehicles, which will improve cash flow for up to 2.7 million small businesses.
- 117 We are helping to spread the benefits of the mining boom through the Minerals Resource Rent Tax, using the proceeds of the boom to cut taxes for struggling businesses, build up superannuation savings, and invest in infrastructure in our regions. We want to ensure all Australians prosper from the boom.
- 118 We are also committed to making the necessary savings so we can invest in reform priorities, provided that in making such savings we preserve our commitment to ongoing government support for those who are the most marginalised in our society. Labor recognises the need to invest in social as well as economic infrastructure if all Australians are to benefit from a strong economy. We are increasing investment in essential services, such as education, health and housing and in priorities such as mental health, disability and aged care reforms. These reforms and our ongoing robust economic management are making our society and our economy stronger and fairer.

Transforming manufacturing

- 119 Labor recognises that manufacturing is a cornerstone of the Australian economy. It provides high-quality jobs, it produces high-value exports, it nurtures essential skills and drives innovation across the economy. A dynamic manufacturing sector is an essential feature of a resilient and broad-based economy. The phenomenal productivity of manufacturing sustains activity in other sectors, including services—many of which grow from a strong manufacturing base.

- 120 Labor believes that in order to maximise the competitiveness of Australian industries in global markets, the federal government should work in partnership with state and territory governments, industry, businesses, unions, and research centres to lift productivity, improve workforce skills, foster innovation, enhance competitiveness and improve access to overseas markets.
- 121 Powering Ideas: An Innovation Agenda for the 21st Century will continue to shape and direct the transformation of Australian manufacturing. Labor will build on the strong record of existing programs, including:
- the establishment of Enterprise Connect, a national network of skilled business advisers, has helped small and medium businesses boost their performance. It offers comprehensive, independent business advice and a network of resources uniting cutting-edge technology and best practice business models. Enterprise Connect has already worked with over 7500 firms around Australia. Manufacturing Centres are located in each state, and Innovation Centres and networks have been established for a range of industries
 - using Enterprise Connect as the gateway to the innovation system and to provide a comprehensive range of services to firms, including enterprise improvement, supply-chain development, networking and cluster support, and research and technology assistance
 - implementing the new Better Managers program in Enterprise Connect to strengthen leadership and innovation capability in smaller firms
 - effectively integrating Enterprise Connect and its services with Austrade, the Industry Capability Network and other national and state government business support initiatives, and with the industry development activities of industry associations and unions
 - investing in the future of the automotive sector through A New Car Plan for a Greener Future to make the Australian car industry economically and environmentally sustainable by 2020
 - driving future industry development through Australia's new industry innovation councils for key sectors, including those for the automotive and TCF industries, built environment, information technology, transport and logistics (including shipping), steel, pulp and paper and future manufacturing
 - implementing the National Enabling Technologies Strategy for biotechnology, nanotechnology, information and communication technology and other enabling technologies which will ensure appropriate regulation while maximising their contribution to job creation, productivity and competitiveness
 - supporting international investment in strategic technological capabilities and working with foreign owned enterprises to integrate their local operations and suppliers into global supply chains
 - promoting innovation in government—both in the delivery of government services and through procurement policies that support innovation in supplier firms
 - harmonising Australia's patent laws with those of our trading partners
 - developing and implementing a national design strategy to stimulate the development of innovative products, services and business strategies, building on Australia's strengths in design and our creative industries.
- 122 Labor recognises the specific pressures facing our critical TCF industries in the current global climate. TCF industries employ around 50,000 Australians in the formal sector and many thousands more in the informal sector as home-based workers. They maintain valuable skills and capabilities, and underpin regional economies around the country.
- 123 Labor will accelerate the transformation of the TCF sector by supporting the development of new products and processes, targeting opportunities in ethical production and the high-tech, high-value end of the market.

- 124 Labor will also work to maximise opportunities for TCF in government tenders and private investments, at home and overseas, through Enterprise Connect, the Industry Capability Network and the TCF Supplier Advocate. The TCF Industries Innovation Council will also provide advice on the future directions for the industry and the program support needed to meet long-term objectives.
- 125 The conditions of support to TCF companies will be designed to ensure sustainable employment outcomes, ethical labour and environmental standards, and maintain capacity and build skills.
- 126 Labor will continue to require that all companies which tender for government contracts in the TCF industry hold Ethical Clothing Australia accreditation.
- 127 To ensure a level playing field, Labor will work with agencies to extend requirements for ethical labour standards to companies tendering for government contracts who source their TCF contracts from offshore.
- 128 Labor will further reform and extend the TCF Structural Adjustment Program to ensure an appropriate level of funds and that the program better assists workers who lose jobs in the industry, Including:
- a non-means tested training allowance
 - training in English language and literacy
 - customised support for training and job-seeking
 - funding for community-based organisations to advocate on behalf of redundant workers.

Securing high-skilled jobs: responding to a patchwork economy

- 129 The resources boom has opened strong opportunities for Australia, but has triggered structural changes of unprecedented speed and magnitude. Labor recognises that governments have a crucial role in helping Australians manage change, ensuring that opportunities are spread across the economy and that Australia maintains a diverse economy. While we can't stop the changes that our economy faces, Labor is committed to help workers in industries and regions under stress to adjust to change. We have a responsibility to help smooth the adjustment.
- 130 Our focus is on ensuring that we manage the transformation in a way that minimises and smooths out the costs that can come with these adjustments in the short-term.
- 131 We can grasp the benefits that will come with the shift in economic activity towards our regions, while still making sure that everyone has the opportunity to share in the benefits of a stronger economy and that no one is left behind. We must seize the opportunity that the resources boom has created by ensuring a partnership of investment from government and employers to train and develop local highly skilled workers in our rural and regional areas.
- 132 In particular, we see a bright future ahead for an internationally competitive manufacturing sector—a sector that is well-placed to continue its efforts to raise productivity, capture niche markets, enter new supply chains, and make more specialised and highly valued products. This is the way to ensure that Australia's manufacturing sector thrives in the future.
- 133 Labor will monitor the labour market impact of the structural adjustment occurring in our economy, and the government assistance to support jobs and competitiveness. There will be a particular focus on the experiences of women workers and workers who move from full-time permanent employment into casual and insecure work.

Putting innovation at the heart of smaller firms

- 134 Labor recognises the vital contribution made by small business to the Australian economy. We strongly support Australians who choose to pursue a career as independent contractors or small business operators. They are vital contributors to the prosperity of the nation and its people.
- 135 Labor acknowledges that smaller businesses face unique barriers to innovation, in addition to the daily demands of effective business management. We will work with firms to help them invest in themselves. This commitment includes a new Research and Development Tax incentive which will effectively double support to small business compared to the previous tax concession.
- 136 Labor supports competition in the business sector. Where market failure creates anti-competitive conditions Labor will legislate to promote competition. In particular, Labor will legislate effective protections against monopolistic pricing, collusive behaviour, abuse of market power, predatory pricing and unconscionable conduct.
- 137 Labor recognises the difficulties faced by small businesses in recruiting and retaining suitable staff and, through its policies to ease skill shortages and wider labour shortages, will assist small businesses in overcoming these difficulties.
- 138 Labor believes cooperative relationships between small business operators and employees can create the conditions for higher profitability, higher productivity, higher wages and better working conditions.
- 139 Labor recognises that collective bargaining can benefit the public by allowing small businesses and independent contractors to address imbalances in bargaining power with larger businesses. Labor believes small businesses and independent contractors should have choice as to who represents them in collective bargaining. Labor will remove the restriction on trade unions representing independent contractors through the collective bargaining provisions of trade practices law.
- 140 Labor acknowledges that small businesses are less well equipped than larger businesses to bear the compliance burden of government regulation. Labor will continue to advance its agenda of building a seamless national economy and removing excessive red tape and overlapping regulation, in particular through the national reform agenda of the Council of Australian Governments.
- 141 In recognition of the risks and heavier compliance burden borne by small business, Labor supports simplifying the tax system for small business.
- 142 Labor recognises the imperative of small businesses and independent contractors having access to low-cost, timely and informal dispute resolution procedures in respect of their employment and commercial disputes and will ensure that such avenues are available. Dispute resolution procedures will be able to deal with claims of unfair contracts.
- 143 Labor acknowledges that small business owners and managers need ready access to low-cost advice when seeking to start new businesses or expand existing operations and will facilitate the provision of such advice.
- 144 Labor recognises the value of high-speed broadband in boosting the viability of small businesses and independent contractors and will ensure the provision of high-speed broadband through the NBN.

- 145 Labor recognises the important and growing role of women in establishing small businesses, including home-based micro-businesses. Labor will ensure that its small business advisory services are tailored to the needs of women.
- 146 Labor recognises, as a general principle, that genuine independent contractors are governed by commercial law, while employees are governed by employment law.
- 147 Labor recognises that for large numbers of vulnerable independent contractors their protections were watered down by the Howard Government's enactment of the Independent Contractors Act. Labor will move to strengthen protections available to independent contractors by conducting a review of the effectiveness of the Independent Contractors Act. Labor will ensure vulnerable contractors have the ability to access quick, informal and affordable dispute resolution mechanisms.
- 148 Labor opposes sham contractor arrangements, where employees are re-classified as contractors by employers to avoid obligations such as superannuation guarantee payments, workers' compensation coverage and the payment of annual leave and sick leave entitlements. Labor will ensure that, as far as practicable, ambiguity and uncertainty regarding the nature of the contractual relationship is minimised.
- 149 Labor supports the principles behind the alienation of personal services income tax rules and will apply these principles with consistency and transparency. However, the Australia's Future Tax System Review found that the current rules are not fully effective, and are complex and uncertain. Labor will consider a revised regime to prevent the alienation of personal services income. Labor will ensure effective compliance and enforcement of tax obligations and eradicate loop holes that allow employers and employees to evade tax by the utilisation of arrangements that disguise the true nature of the employment relationship.
- 150 Labor recognises that TCF workers and owner-drivers are among the most vulnerable groups of workers and commits itself to the maintenance and enhancement of existing protections for these workers.

A world-class research enterprise

- 151 Labor is committed to channelling resources into science and technology, accelerating their rise up the global value chain. Labor will stand shoulder to shoulder with firms competing in the global innovation race, putting Australia's researchers in the front-line of our industries.
- 152 Labor recognises that the contribution of public researchers in universities and research organisations such as the CSIRO is critical to Australia's innovation effort. They do the bulk of our basic research and the overwhelming majority of our research in the humanities, arts and social sciences. The market generally does not give private firms incentives to perform this kind of research, so publicly-funded researchers must fill the gap.
- 153 Labor supports Australia's research community and will strengthen the nation's critical research assets to meet the ambitious innovation goals we have set for the nation. We will meet these ambitions in the context of a responsible budget by careful stewardship of our research budget and assets.
- 154 Labor acknowledges the new technological developments and international research being undertaken in relation to thorium, such as molten salt technologies, and supports strengthening Australia's science capability in areas such as chemical engineering and physics; and examine opportunities for developing a local industry based on thorium.

- 155 Labor recognises that the research workforce is ageing, and the competition for new talent is intense. Labor's Research Workforce Strategy will lay the foundation for attracting and retaining leading international talent, facilitate researchers returning to the workforce from family responsibilities and promote research training experiences within industry. It will ensure Australia creates viable and attractive career paths for researchers.
- 156 Labor will maintain the pursuit of excellence in Australia's public research sector, harnessing the knowledge collected through Excellence in Research for Australia . We will encourage research groups to perform at world-class levels, and use new mission-based compacts to encourage the effective allocation of resources between disciplines and institutions, while contributing to national priorities. We will also continue to encourage universities to organise themselves into hubs and spokes, helping smaller and regional universities develop their research capacity in areas of strength and strategic interest by teaming up with other institutions.
- 157 Labor has invested in world-class research infrastructure, and opened access to resources at home and overseas, through the Strategic Roadmap for Australian Research infrastructure and the National Research Infrastructure Committee.
- 158 Labor will ensure that Australians have the chance to collaborate and compete on the global stage. The great leaps of the past century were made possible by scientific experiments on a massive scale, far beyond the resources of any one nation. Australia will continue to contribute its research strengths to international collaborative missions such as the European Molecular Biology Laboratory, the International Census of Marine Life, astronomical projects such as the Gemini Observatory and the Giant Magellan Telescope, and the Large Hadron Collider.
- 159 Labor will also continue to support the ability of Australian researchers from all disciplines to collaborate with their colleagues abroad, accessing new ideas and forming and maintaining valuable research networks with the best minds on the planet, through schemes such as the Australia–India Strategic Research Fund and the Australia–China Science and Research Fund.
- 160 Labor understands that the success of the Australian research enterprise—including its ability to reach out effectively to industry and the public sector—requires the active enthusiasm and support of the community at large. We also appreciate the paramount importance of rigorous evidence-based advice. Labor will continue to implement the Inspiring Australia program, promote Questacon's vital education role, support the office of Chief Scientist in its invaluable work, and engage the expertise of the Learned Academies and the networks of other sector bodies.

Building strategic research strengths

- 161 Global competitive pressures are driving a relentless race for research talent and investment. Labor will seek to develop research precincts of global scale in Australia, with the critical mass to deliver breakthrough discoveries and inventions. The CSIRO will work with governments, industry and the research community to channel our separate resources to this collective ambition.
- 162 Labor will also build on Australia's recognised strengths and priority research needs by expanding research in targeted fields. At the same time, Labor will support the development of strategic interdisciplinary collaborations and emergent fields, founded on strong national capabilities across the range of disciplines from the physical and technical to the human and social sciences.
- 163 Labor will ensure our research efforts are trained to the imperatives and opportunities presented by the global challenge of climate change, including the development of clean technologies and strategies to protect our natural assets. Recognising the importance and unique vulnerability of our tropical regions and marine environment, Labor will promote research in these critical fields.

- 164 Labor also recognises Australia's increasing reliance on space infrastructure. Our ongoing social and economic wellbeing and our nation's security depend on access to space-based research.
- 165 Labor is committed to the development of a National Space Policy that provides a clear statement of intent for Australia's future space-related activity and harnesses the strengths of our space research and space industry sectors.
- 166 Labor will strongly pursue Australia's bid to host the Square Kilometre Array, the most ambitious global astronomy project in generations. A successful bid will ensure Australian researchers and firms are at the heart of this revolutionary fifty-year global mission, and will help our people benefit from the diffusion of its technology, access to the world's top astronomers and technologists, and the economic opportunities it will bring.

Putting researchers on the front-line for industry

- 167 Labor recognises that collaboration between government, business and the research community is vital to building industries that can not only survive but that can compete aggressively. We are embedding the goal of collaboration into every research and industry initiative, and building networks that foster new partnerships.
- 168 Enterprise Connect will facilitate the development of partnerships between researchers and firms, drawing on the early success of the new Researcher in Business grant scheme. The introduction of new Australian Research Council Industrial PhDs will provide further avenues for researchers to contribute their talents to industry, and for employers to offer the ultimate in professional development for their research-capable staff.
- 169 Labor will use the mission-based funding compacts to encourage universities to undertake industry-driven research more vigorously. We will continue to utilise the revamped Cooperative Research Centres program to help build novel collaborations between researchers in the universities and agencies and the end-users in industries hungry for practical solutions.
- 170 Labor will also assist firms across the economy to capitalise on the opportunities created by the new Research & Development Tax Incentive.
- 171 Labor is continuing to reform Australia's intellectual property system to create an ideal environment for stimulating innovation and investment.

Science and research

- 172 Labor is building globally competitive research assets, and restoring the dignity and standing of our research community. Labor is building a research infrastructure toolkit for the 21st century, through Super Science scheme and the Education Investment Fund.
- 173 We have put universities on a secure financial footing by re-establishing realistic indexation arrangements for block grants, and providing real funding for the indirect costs of research.
- 174 We have also renewed the nation's commitment to the CSIRO, Australia's premier industrial research institution, at a record \$3 billion over the four years 2011–15.
- 175 Labor has renewed Australia's commitment to key international collaborative research facilities, prosecuted Australia's bid to become the host site of the landmark Square Kilometre Array radio-telescope project, and commissioned a new research vessel, the Investigator.

- 176 Labor established the position of Chief Scientist for Australia as a full-time office and strengthened the independence of the role.
- 177 Labor restored the independence of the Australian Research Council through the appointment of a high level Advisory Committee with the confidence of the university sector.
- 178 Labor is helping the nation to recognise and foster excellence in research. We will maintain Excellence in Research for Australia, a new world-leading research quality evaluation tool that provides the government, industry and researchers with the evidence to make informed decisions.
- 179 Labor has revolutionised the research funding system through new grants and fellowships to help talented researchers at every point in the career cycle realise their full potential, from the ambitious early career researcher to the internationally celebrated mentor. Labor remains on track to double the number of Postgraduate Awards, and has raised the stipend by ten per cent.
- 180 Labor is ensuring that Australia has sufficient numbers of qualified research workers so as to fill the gaps in our researcher workforce, both now and in the decade to come and beyond. At the same time, Labor has already acted to implement programs in areas of obvious need, such as assisting Indigenous researchers to access and pursue research careers, helping to retain talented women researchers, and promoting the closer involvement of industry in hands-on research training.
- 181 We reinvigorated the degraded Cooperative Research Centre program by restoring public good outcomes, opening the scheme up to social and cultural innovation from the humanities and social sciences, introducing annual selection rounds, and sharpening the emphasis on fostering new collaborations and transition to autonomy of established ones. Labor has introduced mission-based compacts to help universities align their resources to their areas of strength and strategic interest, and to help the sector as a whole more effectively address our national priorities and needs.
- 182 Labor has safeguarded the independence and autonomy of researchers working in our publicly funded research agencies and our universities by entering into binding charters and passing legislation to ensure scientific independence and academic freedom. Labor will extend those safeguards, by passing legislation, to cover all researchers working across the Australian Public Service.
- 183 Labor has initiated a groundbreaking science engagement program, Inspiring Australia, which goes beyond the limited aims of science communication and career promotion to bring of the transformative power of science and research to every corner of the nation.

Road, rail and aviation infrastructure

- 184 Labor recognises that all forms of transport have a role to play in moving people and freight, especially within our major cities. It is essential that an efficient road and rail network, supported by a robust public transport system, co-exist in a way that make our cities more sustainable and liveable.
- 185 Labor understands that rail freight is becoming an increasingly significant factor in Australia's economic and environmental performance. Well planned rail freight can stimulate new business activities, and increase the productivity and competitiveness of our export industries. Rail freight is also critical in minimising the transport sector's greenhouse gas emissions.
- 186 Labor understands the importance of reducing transport related emissions in any transition to a low carbon economy. Given the low emissions of rail freight and mass public transport, Labor supports incentives to encourage their use.

- 187 Labor recognises that better planning and investment in road and rail infrastructure is required to serve freight supply chains and the movement of people, particularly in major cities. Labor believes greater uniformity in national regulatory structures will improve the efficiency and competitiveness of road and rail infrastructure. Labor will provide funding for critical road, rail and freight infrastructure including track upgrades and construction, the early commencement of national road projects, and additional funding for the Black Spot program.
- 188 Labor will streamline and improve the regulation, operation and development of land transport policy. Labor will continue to pursue nationally agreed road safety reforms through a National Road Safety Council. Labor will develop a truly national transport policy so that freight and services logistics systems are integrated across modes and can operate efficiently and competitively, with only necessary and nationally consistent regulation.
- 189 Labor will continue to work towards a single national system for each of rail safety regulation and investigation, maritime safety regulation and heavy vehicle regulation.
- 190 Labor will work with the states and territories, the providers of public transport, to achieve greater use of all forms of public transport, thereby contributing to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and congestion in our major cities.
- 191 Labor will have a high level investigation of the feasibility of High Speed Rail for the east coast of Australia as a visionary future infrastructure project for the nation.
- 192 Labor notes the need to encourage the use of the most appropriate forms of transport for the increasing freight and passenger tasks. Intermodal hubs allow passengers and freight to move from one form of transport to another efficiently and effectively. Labor will therefore ensure that any land transport plans identify potential sites for these hubs as a matter of priority.
- 193 Labor is committed to the maintenance of a strong Aviation industry with a secure Australian workforce. Labor recognises that aviation plays a large part in connecting Australia to the world and linking our towns and cities, as well as servicing the needs of regional and remote communities. Labor developed Australia's first ever comprehensive national Aviation White Paper that recognises that safety and security are critical for the travelling public, and that investment in well planned airports and a strong domestic market and general aviation sector are crucial for the long-term future of aviation in Australia. Labor supports well-resourced and maintained emergency services for the aviation industry and is committed to developing an emergency response strategic plan for the aviation industry. Labor supports ownership provisions for Australia's airlines that keep the governance of these airlines in Australia. Labor supports well-resourced and maintained emergency services for the aviation industry and is committed to developing an emergency response strategic plan for the aviation industry. Labor supports ownership provisions that keep majority ownership, operation and governance of these airlines in Australia. Labor supports the inclusion of labour standards in (Open skies) Air Transport Agreements. Labor supports fair and equitable remuneration of aviation workers within the Australian and New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement region. Further, Labor will take steps to ensure that the intent of this platform is given effect on Australia's airlines however they are structured.
- 194 Labor will develop an integrated Sydney Aviation Plan that provides for Sydney's future airport needs. Labor supports a second airport for Sydney to serve the future needs of the region. Labor will maintain the cap and curfew at Kingsford Smith Airport and implement the long-term operating plan maximising take-offs over water.

- 195 Labor recognises that safety and security are critical for the travelling public, and that investment in well planned airports and a strong domestic, general and international aviation sector is critical for the long term future of aviation in Australia and that Labor needs to be constantly investigating options to secure these objectives consistent with the principles in this platform.

Shipping and maritime infrastructure

- 196 Labor recognises that shipping is a key sector in the transport industry and the national economy, and in manufacturing and resource supply chains, with strategic, security, defence, economic and environmental benefits. Labor remains committed to supporting its potential to grow and generate new jobs and economic activity. Labor also recognises the importance of an Australian shipping industry to the development of a maritime skills base required of an exporting and importing nation dependent on shipping and an efficient ports sector.
- 197 A strong national shipping industry is an essential feature of a globalised island economy. Accordingly Labor recognises the important role of government in supporting shipping competitiveness and also supporting the competitiveness of Australia's international shipping opportunity, so Australian shipping can grow market share, gain access to finance, increase employment, innovate and diversify.
- 198 Labor will work to secure employment and career pathways for domestic seafarers, and employment and skill development for seafarers from regional Asia-Pacific nations in the international dimensions of Australian shipping.
- 199 A strong domestic shipping industry can assist in the alleviation of land transport bottlenecks, infrastructure constraints and environmental impacts, as well as improving national security and providing economic benefits derived from the creation of local employment and the growth of maritime services.
- 200 Labor believes that Australia needs a consistent national approach to port infrastructure. Our international gateways and supporting supply chains need governance reforms, improved strategic planning, adequate investments in landside infrastructure and terminals, and better coordination in port precinct and land transport planning. Labor will address the key bottlenecks at Australia's major export terminals, which have been identified by Infrastructure Australia. Labor recognises that the stevedoring industry is one of the most dangerous industries in Australia, and will take action to address this. Labor will work with industry stakeholders and state and territory governments to examine safety issues and to work towards solutions which will underpin a new safety culture in the industry. Where the Commonwealth already regulates private sector Occupational Health & Safety and Workers' Compensation in the shipping, offshore oil and gas, and stevedoring industries, Labor will make further efforts to eliminate regulatory uncertainty and dual jurisdictional involvement including through cooperation with state and territory governments.
- 201 Labor will undertake ongoing harmonisation of shipping policy and regulation. Labor will work towards building a viable and efficient domestic shipping industry, ensuring decent wages and conditions for working Australians, responsible use of single and continuous voyage permits, safety and security in our ports and shipping lanes, a strong regional ports network and a skilled workforce. In particular Labor will:
- build the Australian shipping flag in both domestic and international shipping
 - establish global best practice mechanisms encouraging long-term investment in the Australian shipping industry, address the maritime skills shortage, protect our vast coastline and marine environment and improve our defence capability

- ensure relevant domestic laws apply to all aspects of coastal shipping operating in the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone
- ensure maritime security laws fairly balance national and domestic security requirements with the civil and industrial rights of workers
- explore ways to better integrate shipping reform, maritime employment and maritime skills developed into resource projects, focusing on international trade where Australian exports are crucial to the regional economy
- facilitate a high degree of cooperation between the Australian Defence Force and the Australian merchant fleet
- ratify and implement appropriate International Labour Organisation and International Maritime Organisation conventions, codes and recommendations.

Primary industries

202 Australia's primary industries have played a key role in national economic development throughout our history. They have generated a large share of Australia's wealth, helped shape Australian culture and our national identity and underpinned the establishment of rural and regional communities throughout the nation.

203 Labor believes that in the century ahead of us, primary industries will continue to play a major role in creating wealth, income and jobs in rural and regional Australia, and generating export income for the nation.

204 Labor will support the productivity and development of Australian primary industries by:

- ensuring Australia plays a strong role in efforts to address global food security challenges
- helping our primary industries prepare for climate change and future droughts and extreme weather events
- helping our farmers, forest growers and landholders reduce emissions through the carbon farming initiative
- fixing our biosecurity system to help prevent the introduction of exotic weeds, pests and disease
- strengthening the role of farmers in the delivery of environmental services
- boosting productivity through investment in research and development, skills and training
- boosting productivity through innovation and uptake of new technologies
- maintaining existing markets and developing new trade opportunities
- developing policies to support new forms of rural investment
- improving safety in the workplace and on the farm
- supporting the development of fisheries and aquaculture
- supporting the sustainable use of forest resources.

205 Labor supports a partnership between government and industry for investment in rural research and development. Labor will ensure more effective multi-sector facilitation and prioritisation of investment in research and development through a coordinating Rural Research and Development Council to ensure programs address:

- productivity
- climate change
- energy and/or water efficiency

- regional employment
- family issues and cost of living
- industry consultation and uptake of technology
- effectiveness and timeliness of commercialisation of research outcomes.

- 206 Labor will work with industry to develop programs to upgrade workforce skills and expand the opportunities for the primary industry sector workforce, with a particular focus on women, young people, and people from non-English speaking backgrounds and Indigenous Australians, especially in regional, rural and remote communities.
- 207 Given the importance of the reputation of Australian produce for its quality, hygiene standards and safety, Labor believes government has an important role to play in supporting innovation, export market development, skills development and productivity through the food industry's production, manufacturing, marketing and distribution chain.
- 208 Labor will seek to maximise access to domestic and international markets for Australian agriculture, fisheries and forest products, in particular through multilateral negotiations and treaties by providing a level playing field in domestic and international markets for Australian producers consistent with our international trading obligations and the promotion of core labor standards internationally, while also supporting domestic and international marketing of Australian primary industries.

Australian agriculture

- 209 Labor recognises the need for the Australian and international community to address global food security given the threats to the life and health of millions of people resulting from increases in food prices.
- 210 Labor believes the global food security challenge must be addressed by boosting research and development, helping to remove barriers to global trade and driving productivity along the food production chain. Labor believes Australia has an important role to play in facilitating long-term solutions through increasing the sustainable production of more food while building agricultural capacity in developing countries.
- 211 Labor acknowledges the growing importance of farmers in the development and production of alternative fuels, including biofuels produced on farms. Labor supports the need for research and development into new technologies and processes that support the development of second generation biofuels technology.
- 212 Labor believes the use and approval of Genetically Modified (GM) crops should be regulated before they can be grown commercially in Australia, in order to protect the health and safety of both people and the environment.
- 213 Labor will develop a National Emerging Technologies Strategy to increase research and improve the regulation of biotechnology, nanotechnology and other new technologies. Labor understands the value in looking at the science and research on GM crops on a case-by-case basis. Labor recognises that GM crops can contribute to meeting global challenges of climate change and food security. Labor believes:
- a licence for a GM crop must not be issued unless it can be demonstrated that any risks can be managed to protect the health and safety of people and the environment
 - foods produced using gene technology must be assessed as safe for human consumption before they can be sold

- labelling should enable people to make informed choices about what they eat
- rules requiring food containing DNA and/or protein resulting from genetic modification must be labelled 'genetically modified' should be retained.

214 Labor believes that a rigorous and effective biosecurity system is vital to the Australian economy, our unique environment and sense of community wellbeing. Labor supports a biosecurity system that allows us to trade goods and move people between borders, while also protecting the integrity of our environment, the health of all Australians, our favourable pest and disease status, and the productivity and ongoing viability of our primary producers. Labor is committed to acting in response to the Beale Review, to ensure Australia's biosecurity system is better able to respond to increasing and more complex threats associated with globalisation, agri-terrorism and climate change.

Australia's fisheries industry

- 215 Labor recognises the importance of Australia's recreational and commercial fisheries in providing economic opportunities and supporting the social wellbeing of rural, regional and metropolitan communities. Labor supports the responsible use of Australia's fisheries resources for wild harvest commercial fishing and aquaculture activities and recreational, sport and charter fishing activities.
- 216 Labor believes aquaculture will play an increasingly important role in meeting the challenges of global food security, regional economic development, Indigenous employment opportunities and in relieving pressure on wild fish stocks.
- 217 Labor supports the need for investment in research and development that aims to improve commercial fisheries' productivity, assist the wild harvest and aquaculture sectors to respond to a changing climate and ensure sustainable use and appropriate protection for marine, estuarine and freshwater fisheries' resources.
- 218 Labor recognises that climate change threatens the productivity of fishing and aquaculture businesses and that Australians working in these industries will need support as they respond to the challenges of climate change.
- 219 Labor supports collaboration with near neighbours on measures that encourage responsible fishing practices, actively prevent illegal fishing activities in Australian waters and impose tough sanctions on illegal foreign fishers.

Australia's forest and forest products industry

- 220 Labor recognises the importance of the forest and the forest products industry to the Australian economy and employment, and the need for forests to continue to be based on ecologically sustainable development principles. Future development of the forest and forest products industry must take place on an ecologically and economically sustainable basis. Labor initiated a Commonwealth parliamentary inquiry into the current and future prospects of the Australian forestry industry and has received a report from the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Resources, Fisheries and Forestry. Labor will respond to the report and its recommendations in consultation with industry stakeholders, timber communities and interested parties in order to secure the social, economic and environmental dividends associated with a robust and vibrant industry.
- 221 The forest and forest products industry provides a source of employment for regional communities and contributes to economic growth and employment through increasing downstream processing of resources taken from public and private forests, including pulp and paper milling, veneer milling and plywood manufacturing.

- 222 Labor has established a Pulp and Paper Industry Strategy Group, which has reviewed current industry arrangements, including investment incentives, identifying new markets and generally assisting the industry to reach its potential. The Pulp and Paper Industry Strategy Group has submitted a detailed report to government on the strengths, opportunities and challenges facing the industry. Labor is committed to the industry and will work with the established Pulp and Paper Industry Innovation Council in implementing the report's recommendations to secure the future of the industry.
- 223 Labor will develop a comprehensive forest plantation strategy, while reviewing the impact of log exports to ensure the long term future of the forest industries and Australian forest communities that depend on the continuing viability of our forest industry, by responding to the report from the inquiry into the current and future prospects of the Australian forestry industry and its recommendations in consultation with industry stakeholders, timber communities and interested parties.
- 224 Labor has acted on the historic Tasmanian Statement of Principles and helped to deliver a landmark agreement that will provide certainty for Tasmania's forestry industry, support local jobs and communities, and protect the state's public native forests. The intergovernmental agreement that has been reached between the federal and state Labor governments is unprecedented in the forest debates, in that, rather than seeking to impose a solution, it implements an agreement reached between key stakeholders. This approach provides the opportunity for confidence in the durability of the outcome for industry, workers and environmental non-government organisations. The agreement will help the forest industry adapt to market changes whilst restructuring will support further local value adding and downstream processing. The industry's transition will attract investment in innovation in order to meet the challenges faced by the industry and the agreement provides support to the communities and families that rely on the public native forest sector through retraining, regional development and investment in plantations. Significantly, the agreement guarantees additional protection for Tasmania's public native forests, complimenting the state's world-class reserve system which protects high conservation, ecological and biological values. Tasmania will immediately place 430,000 hectares of native forest into informal reserve, subject to verification of conservation values and supply needs, which the governments will protect under a Conservation Agreement. This agreement marks a new chapter in the diversification of the state that state's economy, the development of a strong forest and forest products industry in the state and the protection of Tasmania's precious environment.

Minerals, resources and energy

- 225 Labor values the enormous contribution to the national economy made by Australia's minerals, resources and energy industries. They generate the largest share of export revenue, support regional economic development, provide employment directly and indirectly for hundreds of thousands of Australians and improve the living standards of the entire community.
- 226 Labor recognises that the development of Australia's natural resources requires that the benefits are shared equitably between producers and the Australian community. Labor is committed to ensuring that the Australian community receives a fair return on the profits made from extracting our resources, while keeping a strong resource sector that remains sustainable into the future. Labor believes it is important that the Australian community gets a fair return from our resources, to put towards building a better nation. Labor has worked with the resources industry to design a profits based resource tax, and we are now progressing the legislation of this initiative. A Minerals Resource Rent Tax will apply to the mining of iron ore and coal in Australia. The Petroleum Resource Rent Tax will be extended to all Australian onshore and offshore oil and gas projects, including the North-West Shelf.

- 227 To maximise the minerals, resources and energy industries' social, environmental and economic contribution to Australia, Labor will continue to:
- encourage, in conjunction with the states, an intensified national minerals, oil and gas exploration effort, and the development of new exploration science and technology
 - develop strategies with industry and states and territories to maximise Australian labour participation, including training and skill development, in all phases (exploration, design, construction, extraction, processing and transportation) of minerals, resources and energy projects, including in the offshore hydrocarbons sector
 - promote the sound development of Australia's coal, oil and gas resources, with particular regard to domestic requirements, the development of Australia's coal, oil and gas exports, and the need for a stable and profitable coal and oil and gas industry
 - encourage the development of low emission fossil fuel technologies
 - encourage downstream processing of minerals, resources and energy products, and, through public and private avenues, the infrastructure necessary to achieve this
 - facilitate the commercialisation and export of minerals-related services and technology
 - create a more efficient national energy market that can enhance Australia's natural advantages in downstream minerals processing for domestic and export markets
 - bolster research, development and technology efforts to ensure the international competitiveness of the minerals, resources and energy industries, including technology and services derived from those industries
 - harness the scientific, technological, research and development, and engineering ingenuity of our minerals and resources industries in a nationally coordinated way
 - make a national effort to maximise our energy security, capacity, efficiency and the lowest practicable and sustainable energy prices for Australian industry and consumers.
- 228 Labor will maximise local content in the manufacture, construction and maintenance of facilities and equipment for production and processing in Australia's minerals, resources and energy industries, including by promoting specific facilities and infrastructure that can build and service major offshore and onshore hydrocarbon projects.
- 229 Labor will continue to ensure that mineral development on Indigenous land proceeds consistently with Labor's land rights and native title policy, maximises Indigenous employment, business, education and training opportunities, and maximises Indigenous community development and self determination opportunities.

Uranium

- 230 Labor recognises that the production of uranium and its use in the nuclear fuel cycle present unique and unprecedented hazards and risks, including:
- threats to human health and the local environment in the mining and milling of uranium, which demand the enforcement of very strict safety procedures
 - the generation of products that are usable as the raw materials for nuclear weapons manufacture, which demands the enforcement of effective controls against diversion
 - the generation of highly toxic radioactive waste by-products that demand permanently safe disposal methods.
- 231 Labor accordingly will only allow the mining and export of uranium under the most stringent conditions.

232 In relation to mining and milling, Labor will:

- ensure the safety of workers in the uranium industry is given priority. Labor has established a compulsory register for workers in the uranium industry that includes regular health checks and ongoing monitoring. The register is held by an independent agency and will be subject to privacy provisions
- ensure that Australian uranium mining, milling and rehabilitation is based on world best practice standards, extensive continuing research on environmental impacts and the health and safety of employees and affected communities, particularly Indigenous communities
- ensure, through public accountability mechanisms, that the Australian public is informed about the quality of the environmental performance of uranium mines
- foster a constructive relationship between mining companies and Indigenous communities affected by uranium mining
- prohibit the mining of uranium within national parks under International Union for Conservation of Nature protected area category 1A, category 1B, and category 2, and listed world heritage areas.

233 In relation to exports other than to India, Labor will allow the export of uranium only to those countries that observe the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), are committed to non-proliferation policies, have ratified international and bilateral nuclear safeguards agreements and maintain strict safeguards and security controls over their nuclear power industries.

In relation to India, an important strategic partner for Australia, commitments and responsible actions in support of nuclear non-proliferation, consistent with international guidelines on nuclear supply, will provide an acceptable basis for peaceful nuclear cooperation, including the export of uranium, subject to the application of strong safeguards.

In addition, Labor will work towards:

- strengthening export control regimes and the rights and authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- appropriate international responses to violations of existing safeguard commitments
- limiting the processing of weapon usable material (separation of plutonium and high enriched uranium in civilian programs)
- tightening controls over the export of nuclear material and technology
- universalising of the IAEA additional protocol making it mandatory for all states and members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group to adhere to the additional protocol as a condition of supply to all their transfers
- criminalising actions of individuals and companies that assist in nuclear proliferation
- the development of an international guarantee of nuclear fuel supply to states foregoing sensitive nuclear technologies
- revising the NPT to prevent countries from withdrawing from the NPT and passing a new resolution in the United Nations Security Council addressing the penalties for withdrawal from the NPT
- encouraging all nuclear states to join the NPT
- reserving the right to withhold supplies of uranium permanently, indefinitely or for a specified period from any country that ceases to observe the non-proliferation safeguards and security conditions applied to Australian uranium exports to that country, or which adopts nuclear practices or policies that do not further advance the cause of nuclear non-proliferation
- supporting the maintenance and enhancement of international and Australian safeguards to ensure that uranium mined in Australia, and nuclear products derived from it, are used only for civil purposes by approved instrumentalities in approved countries that are signatories to the NPT (with the exception of India) and with whom Australia has safeguard arrangements
- seeking adequate international resourcing of the IAEA to ensure its effectiveness in undertaking its charter.

234 Labor will progress these commitments through diplomatic means including the re-establishment of the Canberra Commission to re-invigorate Australia's tradition of middle power, multilateral diplomacy. In doing so, Labor believes that as a non nuclear armed nation and a good international citizen, Australia can make a significant contribution to promoting disarmament, the reduction of nuclear stockpiles, and the responsible use of nuclear technology.

235 In addition, Labor will:

- vigorously oppose the ocean dumping of radioactive waste
- prohibit the establishment of nuclear power plants and all other stages of the nuclear fuel cycle in Australia
- fully meet all our obligations as a party to the NPT
- remain strongly opposed to the importation and storage of nuclear waste that is sourced from overseas in Australia.

Strengthening the services sector

236 Labor recognises that our services industries provide a very large proportion of Australia's employment and a very large proportion of national income. Since many services are also direct inputs into other business activities, effective and efficient services are fundamental to maintaining and enhancing business competitiveness. Ensuring that employment in the services sector continues to provide career development, job security, access to collective bargaining and fair remuneration for employees continues to be a priority. Labor recognises that a strong and efficient service economy is crucial to Australia's long-term economic prosperity and ability to take part in the global services economy.

237 Labor recognises the importance of maintaining and creating high skill, quality jobs in the domestic services sector. The prosperity of the years ahead will increasingly come from businesses that provide the many services that are essential to consumers in a modern industrial society—such as financial, retail and personal services, transport, communications, information technology, data management, legal, medical, scientific, engineering, construction, education, tourism, hospitality and leisure services—due to their increasing capacity to:

- improve our ability to compete on the international stage by making export initiatives in other sectors more competitive
- penetrate services export markets in their own right
- and compete with imported services on cost and quality.

238 There is great opportunity to grow Australia's services exports, however Australian consumers are increasingly receiving services from off-shore locations with no knowledge that this is occurring. Where services are provided from off-shore locations this should be disclosed to allow consumers to make informed purchasing decisions. Labor has implemented a service economy strategy that has, where feasible, introduced country of origin disclosure legislation for services and we will continue to work with the industry and unions to ensure disclosure is appropriate in the area.

239 Off-shoring of service sector jobs has been emerging as an important issue impacting employees and communities for a number of years. Service sector employees e.g. banks, communications and IT in particular, have been interested in off-shoring as a way of reducing costs. Labor believes that all service sector businesses have a responsibility to support and promote new and better Australian jobs, creating opportunities for local employment as they grow their operations.

240 Labor is committed to ensuring that services industry organisations who derive their business and profits from the Australian community contribute economically and socially into the future. Australia needs a service industries strategy. This must be led and developed by a task force that includes all the relevant players. The Service Industries Task Force should report directly to a government with the capacity to implement recommendations across the whole of government. The strategy needs to focus on innovation and identifying capabilities that exist in the Australian economy that can provide the basis for a globally competitive services sector. The objective must be for Australia to establish itself in the global traded services economy. Implementation of the strategy will need to focus on:

- developing stronger linkages between universities, industry bodies, training institutions business, unions, state and federal governments
- improving skills through training and other targeted skills development initiatives
- scaling up parts of the Australian services sector through clusters, networks and mergers
- encouraging leaders in the services sector capable of building a globally competitive and productive sector
- development of infrastructure with internationally competitive costs
- leveraging the roll out of the NBN to build competitiveness and productivity and strengthen the regional job market
- building capabilities in data management
- building market linkages into the global services sector
- investment attraction for companies who can build an international presence for Australia
- marketing and branding Australia's key capabilities in the services sector.

241 Labor is concerned with the widespread use of sham contracting in the services sector. Sham contracting is the deliberate or reckless misclassification of the working relationship as a contract for services instead of traditional employment relationship. This misclassification results in knowing or reckless behaviour designed to result in workers being denied employment benefits and protections, including superannuation entitlements. Labor notes that the Fair Work Ombudsman has recently identified vulnerable workers in the call centre, cleaning and beauty industries as being particularly susceptible to this practice. Having high risk factors for potential underpayment and misclassification of workers as independent contractors, where they are in truth employees. Labor will continue to act to ensure compliance with the Fair Work Act and its provisions against the misclassification of the working relationship. Further, Labor will strengthen current measures to stop the use of sham contracting by unscrupulous employers.

242 Labor believes contemporary Australia is a powerful brand, drawing visitors from around the world and across the nation for both work and leisure. Spending by international and domestic visitors contributes \$34 billion to Australia's economy. Visitors create employment for one in every 12 working Australians and support hundreds of small and regional businesses.

243 Labor supports the tourism industry as a leading economic force and is working with industry to ensure tourism's growth is consistent with our broader economic, environmental, cultural and regional objectives.

244 Labor recognises that the strong Australian dollar is a challenge for tourism and has been working hard with the industry to secure the sector's continued success.

245 Labor believes that we can best fulfil the potential of Australia's tourism industry through:

- introducing a price on carbon to preserve the resilience of some of our most prized natural assets, including the Great Barrier Reef, Kakadu National Park and the Australian Alps
- continuing to encourage businesses to develop cost effective energy saving opportunities to reduce carbon emissions
- contributing direct support of almost \$650 million over the coming years for leading edge marketing and supply side development
- support for education and training via a nationally recognised formal training package based on agreed industry standards and national regulation of Vocation and Educational Training
- engaging with governments, industry and unions to create and develop quality jobs in the tourism sector including through appropriate training and safe work strategies to encourage long term skilled and stable employment with career options, including appropriate recognition in wages of training and productivity outcomes
- taxation arrangements that are conducive to the industry's growth
- recognition of the significant and growing potential of agri-food, nature based-tourism and heritage tourism, as well as the potential for these parts of the tourism industry to contribute to making the tourism industry more ecologically sustainable and responsive to our cultural heritage
- developing tourism projects to enhance employment and business opportunities for Indigenous Australians in conjunction with appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative bodies, and foster tourism that builds a wider understanding of the culture of Indigenous Australians
- appropriately resourcing the marketing and promotion of Australia for visitation, tourism trade investment and employment through Tourism Australia
- working collaboratively with the states and territories to ensure Australia is adequately promoted for domestic tourism visitation, trade, employment and investment
- providing adequate tourist forecasting and research services, recognising the significance of accurate robust data to inform long-term government and industry and investment and union support
- supporting the development of regional destinations by implementing programs that encourage authentic product and experience development for new and existing small and medium enterprises
- committing to quality, long-term, skilled and stable jobs, with access to training and career development
- recognising prior learning for employees in the tourism sector.

Chapter 4: A clean energy future

Introduction

- 1 A clean energy future is at the heart of Labor's long-term plan to reshape our economy and cut carbon pollution. By acting now, Labor is helping Australia look forward to continued economic growth while protecting our environment for future generations. Just as Labor's 1980s reforms laid down the bedrock of our current prosperity, pricing carbon and moving to clean energy will ensure the Australian economy of the 21st century remains globally competitive.
- 2 The foundation of Labor's plan is the climate science. We are advised by scientists that the world's climate is changing and that there will be severe, adverse effects on our nation if the trend continues. Globally, 2010 was the warmest year on record, with 2001–10 the warmest decade. In Australia, each decade since the 1940s has been warmer than the preceding decade. This affects our water security, coastal development, infrastructure, agriculture and health. The environmental consequences translate readily into economic costs and, as a hot and dry continent, Australia has more to lose from climate change than all other developed countries. The longer we wait to take action, the harder and more expensive the change will be.
- 3 Countries around the world are already taking action on climate change. Ninety countries—representing 80 per cent of global emissions and 90 per cent of the world's economy—have already pledged to take action on climate change. Globally, more money is now invested in new renewable power than ever before.
- 4 Alongside climate change, broader environmental issues and environmental protection remain of critical concern to Labor and to Australia's future. This includes protecting our biodiversity and our treasured lived environments. By identifying, protecting and managing our built and cultural heritage, we are conserving a valuable asset and ensuring that these places will continue to be experienced and enjoyed by future generations.

Labor values

- 5 Labor is a social democratic party and believes there is a positive and essential role for government in securing economic and environmental wellbeing. Labor will not ignore the evidence on climate change and will protect Australia's future.
- 6 Labor wants intergenerational equity. Our pursuit of social justice and fair opportunities for all extends to future generations. We believe we have an obligation to leave the world a better place, not to pass on the problems we found too difficult to deal with to our grandchildren and to their grandchildren. Labor believes in making the hard choices now to deliver a clean environment and sustainable prosperity.
- 7 Labor also wants equity within Australia as we move to address climate change and is ensuring that low and middle income earners do not carry a disproportionate burden of our transition to a low carbon economy.
- 8 Labor also believes that the action we need to take now, to ensure future generations can thrive, should not be at the expense of today's Australians. Alongside a price on carbon, Labor believes in supporting Australian jobs and families as we build the clean energy economy. Labor is committed to building a vibrant, clean technology industry in this country.

- 9 Labor believes in evidence-based policy and in constructive dialogue. We have listened to the scientists from CSIRO, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, the Australian Academy of Sciences, NASA and academies of science from around the world. We have engaged in extensive consultation across Australia, with local communities and industry. Our clean energy policy has been informed by these conversations.
- 10 Labor believes in constructive international engagement. While it is in the long term national interest for Australia to transition to clean energy, Labor remains committed to reaching a global agreement on climate change. Tackling climate change will require action by all countries. Reaching agreement between all countries on how to do this is challenging. Each country has its individual priorities and needs, so the international negotiations must find a common ground. Labor will make sure Australia continues to play a constructive role to find this common ground.
- 11 Protecting our biodiversity is a core environmental challenge, requiring research, regulation and protection through sustainable land management practices, forestry, parks and reserves and cooperation with landholders, land managers, governments and agencies. Labor created Australia's modern system of national parks, including the Kosciuszko National Park.
- 12 Labor believes our environmental challenge extends to lived environments and involves identifying, preserving and restoring significant examples of our built and cultural heritage. Our environmental challenge extends to ensuring we have well resourced and equipped emergency services to protect and assist our communities as we respond to the emergencies we will face due to the effects of climate change.

Labor achievements

Climate change

We have:

- ratified the Kyoto Protocol as one of the first acts of the Labor Government on coming to power in 2007
- expanded the Renewable Energy Target and will ensure 20 per cent of Australia's electricity will come from renewable sources by 2020
- developed a comprehensive plan to move to a clean energy future, which starts with putting a price on carbon
- committed to establish the \$10 billion Clean Energy Finance Corporation from 1 July 2013 committed to establish the \$3.2 billion Australian Renewable Energy Agency, which will incorporate existing initiatives including Solar Flagships and the Australian Solar Institute helped 2500 schools take practical action to tackle climate change, through the National Solar Schools program, by installing solar panels and water tanks
- committed to expand the Low Carbon Communities program to help low income households, local governments and community organisations to save energy
- committed to invest in a \$1.2 billion Clean Technology Program to help businesses to improve energy efficiency and reduce their carbon pollution
- initiated the Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute to drive the dissemination of technology and knowledge around the world.

Environment and heritage

We have:

- committed to reform for the Murray–Darling Basin with more than \$5 billion of funding
- invested more than \$2 billion in Caring for our Country programs, which aim to protect Australia's unique environment by supporting the contributions of volunteers and community groups
- funded national, regional and local Landcare programs
- taken action in the International Court of Justice to end whaling
- invested in Reef Rescue to protect the Great Barrier Reef, one of the world's greatest natural wonders
- committed to the Marine Bioregional Planning process to support the conservation and sustainable use of Australia's oceans
- started a pilot of drought reform measures in Western Australia to help farmers better manage the risks of drought and prepare for future challenges
- developed a Sustainable Population Strategy, to ensure population changes are compatible with the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of Australia.
- established a Biodiversity Fund committing \$1 billion over six years to restore and protect our unique biodiversity, and enhance the carbon-carrying capacity of the landscape.

Energy capacity

We have:

- established the Australian Energy Market Operator—a key energy market reform—and the Gas Short Term Trading Market to provide greater transparency in the domestic gas sector through the Standing Council on Energy and Resources
- legislated for the National Energy Customer Framework, which was the last big unfinished reform coming out of the Energy Reform Implementation Group
- established the Australian Solar Institute and the Australian Centre for Renewable Energy, both of which are being rolled into the \$3.2 billion ARENA that will be operational from 1 July 2012
- started work on an Energy White Paper expanded the Energy Efficiency Opportunities program to include generators and networks, allowing smaller businesses to opt-in
- delivered a Smart Grid City trial
- delivered a National Energy Security Assessment
- We continue to play an active role in energy policy internationally.

Labor priorities

The transition to a clean energy future

- 13 Labor has a comprehensive plan to create a clean energy future for Australia. Starting with a price on carbon pollution, Labor will promote innovation and investment in renewable energy, encourage energy efficiency and create new opportunities for farmers and regional communities in the land sector to cut pollution levels.
- 14 We will:
- dramatically cut pollution: our clean energy plan will cut pollution by at least five per cent compared with 2000 levels by 2020, which will require cutting new expected pollution by at least 23 per cent in 2020. By 2050, we are committed to cut pollution to 80 per cent below 2000 levels
 - unleash innovation and investment worth billions of dollars in renewable energy: large scale renewable electricity generation, excluding hydro, is projected to be 18 times its current size by 2050. Total renewable generation, including hydro, will comprise around 40 per cent of generation in 2050
 - transform our energy sector away from high polluting sources, like brown coal. We will seek to negotiate to close down up to 2000 megawatts of high-polluting coal-fired power generation, creating space for new clean energy supplies. In such cases Labor will work with industry and the relevant unions to ensure proper processes are in place to manage employee-related issues
 - store millions of tonnes of carbon in land through better land and waste management. Between now and 2050, around 460 million tonnes of carbon pollution will be reduced or stored instead of entering our atmosphere under the Carbon Farming Initiative.

A carbon price

- 15 Putting a price on carbon is the most environmentally effective and cheapest way to cut pollution. This is a fact well recognised by economists from around the world, and respected institutions such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Productivity Commission. Currently, releasing carbon pollution is free despite the fact it is harming our environment. A carbon price changes this. It puts a price on the carbon pollution that Australia's largest polluters produce. This creates a powerful incentive for all businesses to cut their pollution, by investing in clean technology or finding more efficient ways of operating.
- 16 The carbon price is the first element of Labor's plan for a clean energy future. It will trigger a broad transformation of the economy. Labor is committed to an emissions trading scheme, beginning with a fixed price but transitioning to a flexible price in 2015.
- 17 To ensure we achieve our commitment to cut pollution to 80 per cent below 2000 levels by 2050, when setting pollution caps Labor will be guided by the latest climate science, Australia's international climate change obligations and the advice of the independent Climate Change Authority.
- 18 Our economy has successfully handled comparable structural changes over its history. In fact, transformative changes—new products and technologies, and the integration of our economy into the global economy set in train by the reforms of the 1980s and 1990s—have underpinned rising prosperity and sustainable growth in Australia.

- 19 All revenue from the carbon price will:
- support jobs and competitiveness
 - cut taxes and increase payments to help households with modest price impacts
 - build our new clean energy future.

Supporting industry and jobs

- 20 Labor will deliver sustainable industry policy for the transition to a low carbon economy that utilises the full suite of policy measures available to maximise competitiveness and job growth. Labor recognises that policies to support industry and jobs must include a focus on regional workers and communities at the front line of the transition to a low pollution economy, and promote collaborative planning between workers, employers and government. Sustainable industry policy also includes a plan for research, development and expansion of the renewable energy sector.
- 21 Labor recognises the importance of growing diverse regional economies in areas such as the Latrobe Valley, the Illawarra and the Hunter Valley, as we make the transition to a low pollution economy. Labor recognises that these communities and their traditional industries have underpinned our prosperity and have been the source of jobs for generations of Australians. Labor will work with communities, unions and industry to develop a comprehensive regional development approach which supports the growth of sustainable new industries, technologies and practices.

Household assistance

- 22 Labor will make sure pensioners, low and middle income earners and families are looked after. More than half of the revenue raised from the carbon price will go to households to help meet price impacts and help them to make a contribution to action on climate change.
- 23 Labor's plan will see nine out of ten Australian households get help to make the transition to a clean energy future. There are two ways that households will receive assistance:
- increases in pensions, allowances and family payments
 - income tax cuts on top of these increases.
- 24 Labor will use revenue from the carbon price for significant tax reform—the tax-free threshold will be trebled, while everyone earning up to \$80,000 will receive a tax cut. This in itself is a significant, progressive tax reform.
- 25 Labor will make sure the assistance to households is reviewed and adjusted so that it remains current with price impacts.

Clean energy

- 26 During our first term in government, Labor raised the Renewable Energy Target to 20 per cent ensuring 20 per cent of Australia's electricity supply will come from renewable sources by 2020.
- 27 Labor will continue to work toward an increasing proportion of clean energy generation beyond the current mandated target of 20 per cent by 2020.

- 28 With the carbon price and Renewable Energy Target, the new Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) and the Australian Renewable Energy Agency will drive the biggest expansion in the clean energy sector in Australia's history, building a critical mass of renewable energy, energy efficiency and low-emissions generation projects. In developing clean energy, Labor is creating the next generation of industrial jobs. In keeping with Labor's commitment to encouraging local content and industry participation in major projects, Labor will apply industry participation plans for grants of more than \$20 million made under this program for clean energy grants, consistent with the level of the government's current procurement policy. All portfolio transactions of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation exceeding \$20 million would require Australian Industry Participation Plans, subject to the consideration of the report of the CEFC Chair. The CEFC Board will be highly skilled and reflective of the broader community, drawn from the trade unions, the business and investment community and energy and infrastructure industries. The composition of the Board will be determined to best meet the requirements of the CEFC mandate and objectives.
- 29 Clean manufacturing and clean technology service industries will help to drive Australia's transition to a clean energy future. Labor will work with industry to help local firms compete for new clean technology investment, participate in major clean technology infrastructure projects and capitalise on the growing global demand for energy efficient products.
- 30 Labor will support the development of climate change solutions through the Clean Business Australia programs, helping to lift the energy and water efficiency of manufacturing processes and commercial buildings.
- 31 Labor will also invest \$1 billion in two new Clean Technology Investment Programs to support investment in energy-efficient capital equipment and low pollution technologies. This includes dedicated funds to the Food and Foundries Program and manufacturers in other sectors. Labor is also establishing a \$10 billion Clean Energy Finance Corporation to provide a major stimulus to the commercialisation and deployment of renewable energy, energy efficiency and low pollution technologies. This will provide a further fillip to the manufacturing businesses that provide inputs to these sectors. These initiatives will capitalise on Australia's existing expertise and lift Australia to the forefront of climate change science, research and innovation.
- 32 Labor will encourage superannuation funds to invest in clean technology and job creation and adequately consider the environmental impacts of investment decisions.

Energy efficiency

- 33 Labor will help Australians save money on their energy bills. Australia can reduce carbon pollution by improving energy efficiency across government, business and households. Small actions can make a big difference, and simple improvements to the way we do things save money. That is why energy efficiency is a key part of our plan for a clean energy future.
- 34 Labor will assist low and middle income households to reduce their energy costs and contribute to a clean energy future with schemes to improve energy efficiency.
- 35 Labor is committed to undertaking more work—which will include a proper cost benefit analysis—on the development of a national energy savings scheme that rewards energy efficiency actions across households and businesses, with any consideration of such a scheme to be a COAG decision. Labor will help households to use energy more wisely by providing advice, including through the Living Greener website, which provides information on savings through improved energy efficiency.

- 36 The Remote Indigenous Energy Program will provide around 55 remote Indigenous communities with funding to install renewable energy systems, reducing reliance on diesel for electricity generation.
- 37 The carbon price will provide strong incentives for businesses to improve their energy efficiency. The government will help businesses in this process through a range of measures, including the \$1.2 billion Clean Technology Program.

Carbon farming

- 38 Labor will purchase non-Kyoto compliant carbon credits through the Carbon Farming Initiative. This program will create incentives to undertake land-based action such as the storing of soil carbon, revegetation and forest conservation. Credits from these projects can also be sold to companies wanting to offset their carbon pollution to meet voluntary commitments to carbon neutrality. The Carbon Farming Initiative will provide new economic rewards for farmers and landholders that take steps to reduce carbon pollution. Labor will continue to facilitate the development of new crediting methods consistent with the carbon farming legislation, including in relation to forestry activities and agricultural practices which are not common practice.
- 39 Labor supports Indigenous land producing benefits for Indigenous people.
- 40 Carbon farming projects can increase resilience to the impacts of climate change, protect our natural environment, and increase farm profitability and food production. Increasing carbon storage in agricultural soils improves soil health and productivity. Revegetation will help restore degraded landscapes, provide biodiversity habitats and corridors, and help to address salinity, protect livestock and reduce erosion.

Indigenous economic development

- 41 Labor supports Indigenous Australians, particularly those living in remote communities, to be part of national action to tackle climate change. Labor will:
- support employment programs for Indigenous Australians to work on and manage country
 - support new opportunities for Indigenous Australians, particularly those in remote and regional communities, to participate in a low carbon economy through initiatives such as carbon farming
 - support Australians, including Indigenous Australians, living in remote communities reliant on diesel fuel for electricity to transition their use to low-carbon alternatives such as solar.

International action on climate change

- 42 Labor's first act of government was to ratify the Kyoto protocol, which signified Australia's readiness to be part of existing international efforts. Under Labor, Australia is now playing an active and constructive role in international efforts to forge a new global climate change agreement which covers a broader range of countries and emissions than the Kyoto Protocol alone.
- 43 Labor believes a key part of reaching a global solution involves decoupling economic growth from emissions growth, a priority that has particular meaning for developing countries, which have a right to promote sustainable economic development and raise living standards.
- 44 Labor recognises that a critical aspect of the global effort is cooperation with developing countries to develop technologies for cleaner growth, such as the Global Initiative on Carbon Capture and Storage initiated by Labor.

- 45 Labor recognises that achieving a comprehensive global solution also requires a change in the traditional dynamic between developed and developing nations, and has fostered cooperative relationships with developing countries, such as with Indonesia through the Australia–Indonesia Forest Carbon Partnership. In consultation with interested Australian parties, Labor will continue to work collaboratively with developing countries to support the participation of relevant stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, local communities and civil society, in REDD+ mechanisms.
- 46 Labor is also committed to working within our region with vulnerable developing countries to adapt to climate change. Labor will help our neighbours, primarily in the Pacific and Timor Leste, to prepare for and adapt to the effects of climate change.

Direct investment in clean energy jobs

- 47 Labor believes Australia's low-carbon future will be driven by the creation of new industries and new clean energy jobs in existing industries. These new industries and new jobs represent an important opportunity to tackle climate change and assist industries to transition to a low pollution future. Labor recognises that the skills needed to make these transitions are often found in regions with existing carbon reliant industries, providing an opportunity to create the jobs of the future when and where they are needed.
- 48 Labor will continue to press for appropriate verification mechanisms in international agreements on climate change. Action that Australia and other countries take to address climate change must be consistent with maintaining an open and transparent international trading system and reinforce the importance of maintaining mutually supportive trade, industry and environment policies.
- 49 Labor will drive the creation of clean technology jobs in Australia through the implementation of a carbon price and other measures and will continue to draw on international experience and world leading policies to further enhance clean technology employment opportunities for Australians. Australia's response to climate change should seek to create new ways of work in all its forms—from production and maintenance, through to research, design and development.
- 50 Labor recognises the importance of supporting high carbon emitting industries to find ways to become more energy efficient and reduce emissions. This includes supporting workers in these industries to access training and skills programs to allow them to support lower emissions practices. Labor further recognises the importance of making training and skills programs available for workers wishing to transition to new, clean energy or low pollution industries.

Building energy capacity

- 51 Among Australia's greatest economic strengths is the extent and diversity of its natural energy resources, energy infrastructure and energy technology. Australia is both an important producer of established sources of energy, including coal, gas, oil and condensate, and a world-class developer of renewable and sustainable energy technologies.
- 52 Labor recognises the community concern about coal seam gas extraction. Labor will take action to ensure that it is conducted in a way that is safe for local communities, manages environmental impacts and ensures sustainable local economic activity. Labor expects the industry to operate at the highest operational and environmental standards and will ensure the coal seam gas industry assess and manages environmental and other impacts including on water reserves and co-existence with other agricultural activities. Labor also calls on the industry to constructively engage with affected landholders to achieve and sustain community acceptance.

- 53 Australia's energy supply and use must be sustainable, economically efficient and internationally competitive. Such national energy capability is essential for Australia's sustained economic growth. Labor recognises that the long-term challenge of global environmental issues must be built in from the start in planning the future of the Australian energy industry.
- 54 Increasingly, more efficient and clean energy supplies and use will enhance Australia's capacity for the downstream processing of minerals and other natural resources and more competitive manufacturing generally, thus providing employment benefits.
- 55 The continued development and application of new technology to improve the economic and environmental efficiency of energy production and consumption is vital to Australia's long-term international competitiveness.
- 56 To improve our national energy capacity, Labor will continue to:
- facilitate a process of cooperation and development involving state and territory governments, industry representatives, including peak industry associations and unions to ensure Australia builds the necessary electricity industry transmission, distribution and generation facilities to meet Australia's electricity demands and ensure supply for the future for all Australians
 - encourage continued development and investment in energy infrastructure and technologies, particularly gas and renewable energy sources and lower emission energy sources such as gas
 - encourage research and commercial development of new and renewable energy sources and technology
 - take into account the relative environmental impact of differing energy sources
 - encourage the use of lower emission energy sources to operate alongside existing energy sources
 - encourage investment in an intensive national oil and gas exploration effort
 - facilitate free and fair competition between energy sources
 - facilitate free and fair interstate trade in gas
 - facilitate a national electricity market
 - encourage co-generation.
- 57 Labor will continue to encourage greater efficiency in the production, transmission and use of existing energy sources by:
- maintaining a concerted and ongoing effort to encourage the greater use of clean and renewable energy sources and enabling technologies in Australia's domestic, transportation and industrial energy consumption through demand management strategies and government procurement policies
 - encouraging greater energy efficiency and consumer purchase of energy efficient products through consumer education programs, innovative financing mechanisms, product standards and energy efficiency labelling schemes
 - encouraging energy audits for the industrial, commercial, transportation and residential sectors to inform users of their relative energy efficiency and how this can be improved.
- 58 Labor recognises that major opportunities are emerging in new and renewable energy technologies within the global energy market. Accordingly Labor will continue to:
- support public and private sector research and development in innovative energy technologies that are cleaner and more efficient
 - ensure 20 per cent of Australia's electricity supply will be sourced from renewables by 2020 through a legislated target

- encourage Australian development, manufacture and commercialisation of renewable energy technologies for both domestic and export markets
- encourage local and foreign investment to increase Australia's renewable energy technology manufacturing capability.

59 Labor's national energy industry policy will continue to integrate the need for improving energy efficiency, abating greenhouse emissions and encouraging the development and commercialisation of new Australian energy industries, including renewable and sustainable energy technology.

60 Labor will continue to ensure that consumers are protected in the new national energy environment, through access to competitively priced energy, proper regulation of the national energy market and viable dispute resolution mechanisms.

61 Labor will accelerate the use of low-emissions technologies in Australia through a coordinated, national approach to research and development of new technologies. This will include:

- international efforts led by Australia's Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute established by Labor in 2009
- continuing support for the National Low Emissions Coal Council that brings together representatives from government, industry, and Australia's research community
- continuing support for the National Carbon Capture and Storage Council, which is examining the existing Carbon Capture and Storage projects across Australia to evaluate effectiveness and provide further support
- continuing support for renewable energy through the \$3.2 billion Australian Renewable Energy Agency, to support solar thermal and solar photovoltaic research and development and help solar power become cost competitive with other energy sources
- developing geo-thermal and second generation biofuels technologies through new demonstration and development opportunities
- continuing to support the Australian Centre for Renewable Energy, which manages a range of renewable energy technology funding programs that support solar, geothermal, second generation biofuels, ocean, storage and renewable integration projects
- eliminating perverse incentives in government policies and programs that encourage energy inefficiency by, for example, replacing mileage-based vehicle salary packaging arrangements with concessions linked to engine efficiency and capacity.

Adapting to the climate change we cannot avoid

62 Labor understands that some climate change is already built into the world's climate, so while we work to reduce emissions we need to adapt to the climate change that is happening now. Adapting to a changing climate is a central part of Labor's long term planning to tackle the issues around water and other resource management. Labor is also working with the states and territories to implement the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework across all jurisdictions through the Council of Australian Governments process.

63 Labor also understands the importance of strengthening the ability of Australians to respond to the impact of climate change, which involves helping local governments, coastal planners, agricultural communities, architects and others to build a response to climate change.

64 Labor will continue to put in place a range of programs at the local level, to assist local councils and other organisations better understand their vulnerability to climate change and develop strategies to address those vulnerabilities.

Preparing primary industries for climate change and future droughts

- 65 Labor recognises that severe droughts and other natural disasters have a serious impact on the livelihood of rural and regional Australia.
- 66 Labor acknowledges the challenges that droughts and human induced climate change poses to Australian primary producers. Labor will continue to work with rural and regional Australia to establish the most efficient and effective policy framework for farmers to manage and prepare for risks associated with long periods of drought in a manner that does not diminish their long-term productivity.
- 67 Labor believes there is a need to refocus programs to support early investment in preparing for the social, environmental and economic impacts of drought and climate change. Drought policy should be aimed not just at improving farm productivity but also supporting the wellbeing of families on the land.
- 68 Labor believes that farmers should be supported during periods of transition to new policy settings by:
- ensuring governments address the specific needs of farming families, farming businesses and farming communities
 - ensuring future farm family welfare assistance is built on mutual responsibility
 - supporting farming families to access off-farm income during times of financial hardship
 - providing farming families with a temporary period of exemption from the normal assets tests for farm assets, but otherwise receiving the same access rights to income support as the wider community. Government support for farm businesses should assist businesses to plan for the future. Farm business support should be premised on a willingness to prepare for the impacts of drought and climate change
 - ensuring government policies and programs support farming communities to prepare for drought and enhance their long term sustainability and resilience.
- 69 Labor recognises the increasing frequency and intensity of drought is not the only risk posed from climate change. Australia's primary industries are particularly vulnerable to predicted increases in severe storm events and shifts in the distribution of weeds and pests.

Strengthening the role of farmers in the delivery of environmental services

- 70 Labor recognises the critical role of the rural community in the ongoing stewardship of our land.
- 71 Labor sees an expanded role for the agriculture sector in meeting major environmental challenges such as soil degradation, salinity, chemical use, water conservation, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, river rehabilitation, feral animal and noxious weed control, and the loss of biodiversity. Labor acknowledges the considerable progress made by farmers in these areas.
- 72 Labor recognises that many of the improvements farmers make to the environmental resilience of their land also make their land more productive and better prepared for the impacts of climate change.

- 73 Labor will:
- encourage the development of innovative production systems and farming practices, new research and infrastructure developments that address these major challenges
 - acknowledge the particular implications for Australian agriculture of climate change, direct scientific effort to identifying areas at risk from such change, and develop long-term strategies for regions required to change the nature of their farming activity
 - make the development of economically and environmentally sustainable farming methods for a changing climate a focus of research efforts.
- 74 Labor is committed to building on the achievements of Landcare, encouraging the uptake of sustainable farming practices and the continuing support for the repair of our rural landscapes.

Managing our water assets

- 75 Labor understands that addressing Australia's long-term water issues requires national leadership. Labor believes that responsible management of water assets requires a combination of:
- taking action on climate change
 - using water wisely
 - securing water supplies
 - supporting healthy rivers.
- 76 Labor is committed to addressing the long term problems of the over-allocation of water resources of the Murray–Darling Basin, and the neglect of the health of its iconic rivers and wetlands. These problems have been further exacerbated by prolonged drought and the emerging impacts of climate change.
- 77 The Murray Darling Basin is one of the most significant river systems in Australia with considerable cultural, social, environmental and economic value. Decades of over extraction from the Basin left many areas of the Basin close to collapse during the recent drought. Labor welcomes the release of the draft Murray Darling Basin Plan on 28 November and notes this significant step on the path to returning the Basin to a more sustainable level of health. Labor endorses the ambition of a healthy working Basin which underpins healthy rivers, strong communities and sustainable food production. Labor notes that since 2008, 1,068 gigalitres of water have been recovered for the environment, mainly through the Australian Government's Water for the Future Program. This water is already delivering substantial environmental benefits in providing environmental flows to wetlands and floodplains across the Basin. Labor calls for a Murray Darling Basin Plan which keeps the Mouth of the River Murray open nine years out of ten to enable the export of salt and sediment from the system. Labor calls for a Murray Darling Basin Plan which, within legal and physical constraints, returns enough water to the Basin to protect key environmental sites, including, but not limited to the Ramsar wetland sites. Labor calls for the government to continue to bridge the gap to new Sustainable Diversion Limits as the Murray Darling Basin Plan is finalised.
- 78 By continuing to purchase water from willing sellers and investing in water savings, Labor will improve the health of our rivers and facilitate an early transition in anticipation of lower sustainable diversion limits under the new Basin Plan.
- 79 Labor will fund research to ensure sustainability of water extraction from the Great Artesian Basin.

- 80 Labor recognises that water is vital to the livelihood of many regional and rural communities across the Murray–Darling Basin. That is why Labor is committed to investing in water efficiency projects in the Murray–Darling Basin to help rural and regional communities improve the efficiency and productivity of water usage. By improving irrigation water management practices and on-farm water use efficiency, and by modernising our outdated, leaky irrigation infrastructure, this investment will enable more crops to be grown with less water. As projects get underway this investment will boost regional economic and employment opportunities in the Basin, and help underpin the future prosperity of irrigation communities.
- 81 Labor recognises that climate change means we need to use water more wisely in our cities, at the same time as diversifying our water supplies so that we reduce our reliance on rainfall.
- 82 Labor will invest in initiatives to improve water security for Australia’s cities and towns. Labor will continue its support for new investments in wastewater recycling, desalination, stormwater harvesting and efficient water infrastructure throughout Australia.
- 83 Labor will also provide assistance for Australian households to adopt water saving and water efficiency measures in their homes and businesses.
- 84 Labor will support research and commercialisation of new technologies in improved water efficiency, desalination and water recycling.

Leadership on sustainability

- 85 Labor is committed to open and transparent environmental decision making and effective monitoring, assessment and reporting of environmental performance. With state and territory governments, Labor will develop a National Sustainability Charter that sets key national targets across a number of areas that impact on Australia’s environmental, social and economic sustainability.
- 86 Labor will establish an independent National Sustainability Commissioner and Council to monitor Australia’s performance against sustainability targets and to evaluate government policies for their impact on sustainability and agreed national targets.
- 87 Labor will incorporate sustainability into government decision making and operations. Labor will ensure all government departments and agencies increasingly adopt best practice energy efficiency. Labor will update the Energy Efficiency in Government Operations policy, which includes portfolio energy intensity targets and minimum energy performance standards for office buildings, appliances and vehicles. Labor will ensure that office copy paper used throughout government will have a minimum post consumer recycled content of 50 per cent by July 2011, with progression to 100 per cent post consumer recycled content by July 2015 consistent with value for money principles.
- 88 Labor will support local government to fulfil its potential in environmental protection, repair and natural resource management.
- 89 Labor will ensure that national environment laws, including the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* provide strong, rigorous and accountable protection for the environment while being harmonised with state and territory regulatory regimes.
- 90 In the context of a comprehensive response to climate change, Labor will consider the appropriateness of a climate change trigger in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

- 91 Labor is committed to post-approval monitoring of major projects to ensure that measures and targets agreed during environmental impact assessment processes achieve the desired environmental outcomes.
- 92 Labor notes that the whole community should play a role in climate change actions. This includes the role played by those in our community that deliver quality public services, like local government, water supply, electricity and public transport. These industries take actions every day in a range of services from recycling, water harvesting, demand management and much more. This is a significant role in making our community environmentally sustainable and fighting climate change. Labor recognises the role played by the community and will continue to implement a broad range of climate change actions.
- 93 Labor recognises the contribution environment and conservation groups make to protecting our environment through practical action and policy and social leadership, particularly at the local level. Labor will continue to work with non-government and environment groups to take action on climate change and protect biodiversity and our natural resources.

Protecting biodiversity and natural resources

- 94 Labor is committed to protecting Australia's biological diversity through a national system of comprehensive, adequate and representative parks and reserves, while using education, regulation and incentives to achieve ecologically sustainable use elsewhere in the landscape.
- 95 Labor will work with state and territory governments and landholders to develop, resource and implement threat abatement and recovery plans for threatened species and ecological communities, while preventing clearing that will have a significant impact on threatened ecological communities and critical habitats for threatened species.
- 96 Labor will work to ensure that Caring for our Country programs and other volunteer and community programs like Landcare support local conservation and environmental priorities as well as contributing to national priorities to improve biodiversity and sustainable farm practices.
- 97 Labor will cooperate with the states, territories and landholders to achieve a net increase in Australia's vegetation cover, to improve its management and to end broad-scale clearing. Funding of state, territory and landholder projects will be conditional upon appropriate clearing controls being in place.
- 98 Labor will promote research into invasive species and weeds and fund measures for their control on both public land and private land.
- 99 Labor will build on the achievements of Landcare by encouraging the uptake of sustainable farming practices and supporting improved natural resource management.
- 100 Labor will provide funding and other support for landholders who have engaged in good environmental practice, particularly those who are conserving and regenerating native plant communities.
- 101 Labor is committed to ensuring proper management and protection of our wetlands and will promote and honour Australia's obligations under the Ramsar Convention.
- 102 Labor is committed to maximising the social, economic and environmental benefits that flow from the sustainable management of Australia's forests.
- 103 Labor will support forest certification which sets best practice, transparent, consistent and objective standards in sustainable forest management, chain of custody and labelling, and promotes adherence to ILO core labour conventions and are managed by organisations with robust governance arrangements.

- 104 Labor is committed to the establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive, adequate and representative forest reserve system, through arrangements like the Tasmanian Forests Intergovernmental Agreement, which facilitate the transition of the industry to a more sustainable footing, increase use of plantations and increase value-adding in the sector.
- 105 Labor recognises the multiple benefits that flow from developing plantations and integrated farm forestry, particularly on existing cleared agricultural land, and recognises that any adverse effects need to be carefully managed.
- 106 Labor does not support mining or other resource extraction in national parks and World Heritage areas.
- 107 Labor supports Indigenous people being involved in land management through various means, including national parks, tourism and state forests, particularly where this provides cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits.
- 108 Labor will work with the Queensland Government and traditional owners to pursue World Heritage listing for appropriate areas of Cape York, recognising the importance of Commonwealth leadership and the consent of traditional owners.

Marine and coastal protection

- 109 Labor is committed to promoting the conservation and sustainable use of our marine and coastal environment. Labor will work with state, territory and local authorities and agencies to ensure Australia's marine environment is monitored and sustainably managed.
- 110 The Commonwealth will provide leadership, policies and resources to maintain marine biodiversity through ecosystem-based management.
- 111 Labor will develop a national coastal policy to respond to population growth in coastal regions and support coastal planning initiatives and consider the impacts of sea level rise and coastal erosion on coastal communities, acknowledging that climate change will exacerbate such impacts.
- 112 Labor will protect our coasts and beaches by investing in high conservation value areas and supporting community Coastcare as well as meeting international obligations, continuing legislative reform and opposing inappropriate development.
- 113 Labor will work towards reducing the serious threat to water quality from coastal shipping practices, sewage and stormwater disposal, thermal pollution, nutrient sedimentation and the introduction of exotic pests and diseases via ship ballast water.
- 114 Labor will promote the efficient and sustainable use of Australia's marine resources and will address unsustainable fishing practices.
- 115 Labor supports meeting Australia's international obligations for marine protection by creating a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of marine reserves, including buffer zones and 'no take' zones, to sustain ecosystem health and fish stocks, commencing with the South West marine bioregion.
- 116 Labor will promote the conservation of key ecosystem health indicator species such as whales, dugongs, turtles and sharks, both in Australian waters and across the world's oceans.
- 117 Labor will work with Indigenous communities and recreational fishers to ensure hunting of marine animals is sustainable and humane and that threatened species are protected.

National and World Heritage

- 118 Labor recognises its international obligations to protected World Heritage Areas, and areas that are subject to international treaties such as Ramsar sites. Labor recognises human activity such as mining and oil drilling, as well as urban and commercial developments near World Heritage Areas, Ramsar and similar sites, have the potential to affect these areas. Labor will ensure that any proposal within the vicinity of a World Heritage Area, Ramsar or area subject to an international treaty, will be subject to a full independent Environmental Impact Statement, and be considered under environment protections and biodiversity conservation legislation.
- 119 Where culturally appropriate, Labor will promote and provide access to our built and cultural heritage, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.
- 120 Labor recognises that Indigenous knowledge is a key to an environmentally and socially sustainable Australia. Labor will fund the recording of Indigenous oral histories, stories and languages to minimise the loss of Indigenous knowledge systems.
- 121 The identification and listing of properties of heritage significance should be carried out by an independent expert body.
- 122 Labor believes that the Commonwealth government has a responsibility to provide adequate heritage protection for Commonwealth properties of heritage significance.
- 123 Labor will support the proper funding, protection, management, monitoring and presentation of World Heritage Areas, including the important work of government authorities such as the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Labor will continue to support the investigation and nomination of areas suitable for future listing in cooperation with state and territory governments.

A cleaner environment for living

- 124 Labor will recognise and support the community's desire to live in a clean and healthy environment, and empower it to achieve that goal.
- 125 Labor will recognise and support the role of non-government and community organisations in advocacy and taking action for the protection of our environment and heritage.
- 126 Labor will support the development of industries that minimise resource consumption, waste and pollution generation.
- 127 Labor will work with state and territory governments to promote a coordinated national approach to waste. This approach will maximise the economic opportunities of a harmonised and strategic national waste policy, and will be informed by the principles of ecologically sustainable development.
- 128 Labor is committed to the strict control of pollutants and toxins in the environment, including the minimisation of the production, import and use of harmful substances, the development of alternative technologies and, where possible, the elimination of harmful substances.
- 129 Labor believes nations have a responsibility for the appropriate disposal of hazardous wastes generated within their boundaries. Labor is committed to fulfilling Australia's obligations in the control of trans-boundary movements of hazardous waste.
- 130 Labor remains strongly opposed to the importation and storage of nuclear waste in Australia that is sourced from overseas, while acknowledging that we have a responsibility to manage nuclear waste that has been produced in Australia.

- 131 Genetically modified crops will not be released unless they are safe to health, safe to the environment and beneficial to the economy and there has been extensive community consultation. Labor will preserve the right of the states to implement and manage moratoria on the commercial production of GM crops.
- 132 Labor will support action to improve air quality and avert the serious health risks that air pollution represents, particularly by promoting national air quality standards and monitoring and reporting air pollution.
- 133 Labor recognises the need to promote more transport choices and will pursue strategies to encourage alternative modes of transport, alternative fuels, greater fuel efficiency and lower average vehicle age.
- 134 Labor recognises that government has a role in long-term strategic planning for demographic change and local government priority setting, particularly by supporting infrastructure investment and protecting remnant vegetation and catchment health.
- 135 Labor is committed to appropriate demographic policies and to ensuring that any population increase is sustainable and does not come at the cost of the environment. Labor has developed a Sustainable Population Strategy. The strategy is the government's framework for a sustainable Australia. It will help to ensure that future population changes are compatible with the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of Australia.
- 136 The strategy recognises that population change is not only about the growth and overall size of our population, it is also about the needs and skills of our population, how we live, and importantly, where we live. It recognises that population change impacts different communities in different ways. A sustainable Australia is a nation of sustainable communities that have the public services, job and education opportunities, affordable housing, amenities and natural environment that make them places where people want to work, live and build a future. The strategy's focus is ensuring that we have in place the necessary policy settings and governance arrangements that will deliver improvements in our wellbeing, at the local, regional and national levels into the future. It outlines our commitment to improving the liveability of our urban areas, and building stronger regions.

Environmental diplomacy

- 137 Labor considers the protection of the global environment a vital foreign policy objective, as environmental degradation contributes to social and political conflict and undermines regional and international security.
- 138 Labor recognises that existing international environmental protection regimes need to be strengthened and new arrangements developed to address emerging issues. Labor will take a leadership role in multilateral forums that consider issues of environmental protection and sustainable development, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Convention for the Conservation of Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, the Convention for the Conservation of Migratory Species and the International Whaling Commission.
- 139 Labor will assess all trade agreements to ensure that they are consistent with the principles of sustainable development, and will work to prevent any conflict arising between trade agreements and multilateral environmental agreements and domestic legislation to protect the environment.

- 140 As a priority, Labor supports cooperation on environmental issues in the Asia–Pacific region through APEC and in cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. We will seek to upgrade consultation with Japan, the US, Canada and New Zealand. We will further seek to consolidate and expand dialogues with major developing countries, especially China, Indonesia and India.
- 141 Labor will increase Australian support for Pacific Island countries, particularly in the areas of sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity, including fisheries.
- 142 Labor will work to further strengthen the Antarctic Treaty System with particular emphasis on enhancing environmental protection.
- 143 Labor will work through international forums to address unsustainable fishing practices worldwide with the establishment of high seas, marine protected areas a particular priority. We will energetically seek to combat unsustainable, illegal and unregulated fishing in the Southern Ocean.
- 144 Labor will pursue a permanent end to all commercial and scientific whaling and the establishment of a global whale sanctuary. Labor will use all available means to end the slaughter of whales for all time, including the option of legal action against whaling nations before international courts and tribunals.

Chapter 5: Opportunity and fairness for working families

Introduction

- 1 Labor is the party of work and opportunity. We want to spread the dignity and purpose of work and enable all Australians to build a future for themselves and their families. We are increasing workforce participation and building the skills of the future. We are restoring fairness at work and improving work-life balance.
- 2 The Australian Labor Party was formed to improve the lives of working people. Early Labor governments transformed wages and working conditions in Australia. Protecting workers' rights will always be central to Labor's mission. Now, investing in skills, rewarding personal responsibility and enterprise, enabling time for parenting and family life, and securing a fair and just level of retirement income are also part of Labor's modern vision.
- 3 Australia's economy and society continue to change. Labor is leading Australia's transition to a high-skill, high-wage, and diverse and clean energy economy. Labor is responding to the challenges of an ageing society and the desire of Australians to have greater choice and control over their lives. Labor's workforce strategy is to create a strong and sustainable economy, provide the support and incentives to get people off welfare and to build the skills of our future workforce. Labor's approach is a bringing together of collective action and individual empowerment. It is forward looking but grounded in the needs and aspirations of today's working families.

Labor values

- 4 Labor believes that fairness in the workplace is fundamental to a fair society and that one of Australia's greatest achievements is the progress over successive generations in improving the working conditions and entitlements of working Australians. Fairness at work is a core value in a modern, prosperous society. It is a key determinant of living standards, financial security and the ability of Australians to make plans for their future.
- 5 Labor believes in the dignity and purpose of work. We believe jobs and job security promote social and financial wellbeing, stable family life and strong communities. Labor is committed to lifting workforce participation and to achieving full employment, meaning everyone who wants to work is supported and able to find a job in a reasonable period of time.
- 6 Labor believes everyone deserves fair access to the economy. This defines Labor's approach to employment services and welfare reform. It means fully understanding the barriers that prevent people getting a job and designing programs to overcome them. It means reforming and modernising services to meet the needs of today's jobseekers.
- 7 Our approach is to create better opportunities that require greater responsibility. Labor believes that those who can work should work, and government has a responsibility to provide support and opportunity to people to enable them to meet their obligations. In the context of an ageing society, and a skills shortage, we cannot afford to have people out of work who could be contributing to our economy and future prosperity. Labor is committed to ending the cycle of welfare dependency where successive generations of families are left to languish on welfare. Strong requirements will ensure that opportunities for training and work experience are taken.

- 8 Labor is committed to helping Australians get the skills they need to find jobs and to meet industry needs now and in the future. Economic growth means more demand for skills not just in mining and construction, but across the economy. We are investing in the skills required for clean energy and new technology industries and in training the next generation of trades-people that are vital to our domestic and industrial infrastructure. Labor is taking a whole economy approach to building the skills of Australia's future workforce.
- 9 The way that work is structured affects the broader wellbeing of individuals and families, in particular how they balance responsibilities at work and with their families, such as raising children or caring for relatives. Labor is committed to improving work-life balance. Labor supports initiatives to improve the balance between work and family life, including flexibility for employees to combine work and family responsibilities, take personal leave for caring responsibilities and the right not to have to work excessive and unsociable work hours. Labor upholds the right of all working families to be able to access common leisure time on significant holidays for the Australian community.
- 10 Labor is committed to building a modern, fair and flexible workplace relations system. Labor believes that a flexible and fair workplace relations system based on a skilled workforce, secure employment and increased productivity is a key element of a modern, prosperous Australian economy and is essential for building and sustaining prosperity for all Australians.
- 11 Labor believes workplace relations should be based on harmonious and productive relationships between employers and employees. Workplace relations laws should be balanced and should promote fairness, flexibility, productivity, job security, employment growth and good wages and working conditions.
- 12 Labor believes that the best outcomes for both employees and employers come about through cooperation at the enterprise level. Industrial relations laws should encourage productive workplace relations by fostering collective bargaining, particularly but not only at the level of individual enterprises, and recognising the right of employees to collective bargain with their employer about wages, conditions, job security and related matters.
- 13 Labor believes all employees are entitled to a strong safety net of fair, relevant and enforceable minimum standards, consisting of ten legislated National Employment Standards, and a modern award system (including minimum wages).
- 14 Labor believes that employees have fundamental democratic rights to representation in the workplace, that employees have a right to freedom of association and that employees' rights to organise and be represented by a union must be respected, including the right to access to representation at work via an effective union right of entry regime in reasonable locations and at appropriate times.
- 15 Labor supports international labour standards and their effective implementation in Australia and supports the International Labour Organisation in its objective of promoting decent work for all and raising labour and social standards.
- 16 Labor believes that employees are best represented in their workplace through membership of their relevant trade union and that unions and union delegates have an important role to play in giving employees a voice at work, building harmonious and productive workplaces, facilitating workplace change, resolving disputes as they arise, improving occupational health and safety, and improving access to ongoing training opportunities.
- 17 Labor believes it is essential that balance in the workplace is achieved through an independent umpire to ensure the fair and effective resolution of disputes, to ensure the fair application of workplace laws and to act in the national interest when required.

- 18 Labor is committed to building retirement income security for all Australians, including by building on the universal superannuation system established by previous Labor governments in cooperation with the union movement and business organisations. Labor supports that any increase in the rate of compulsory superannuation should not result from any trade off in real wage increases for workers.
- 19 Labor believes the level of work-related injuries and illness remains unacceptably high and is committed to creating safer workplaces and ensuring that injured workers are entitled to compensation and assistance.
- 20 Labor believes that Australia's trade unions, as the legitimate representative of the workforce, should be fully consulted and involved across a range of industrial, economic and social issues. Accordingly, Labor in government will aim to include unions along with business, community and other appropriate interests in constituted boards, committees and consultative bodies that provide advice to the government.

Labor achievements

Participation and skills

We have:

- through strong economic management, ensured Australia has one of the lowest unemployment rates compared to the major advanced economies
- secured high workforce participation—since November 2007 the participation rate has remained at or around record high levels
- introduced Australia's first national Paid Parental Leave scheme and extended rights for unpaid parental leave in the National Employment Standards
- overhauled our job services network to focus squarely on getting people off welfare and into jobs, providing more help for people with disabilities, Indigenous Australians and those with severe barriers to employment
- built 100 trade training centres that will help meet the skills shortage and train the next generation of trades-people
- introduced Learn or Earn which guarantees every young Australian under age 25 a training place if they are not already in full-time education or work
- increased support to families by up to \$4000 to encourage teenagers aged 16 to 18 to remain in school or TAFE
- uncapped Disability Employment Services to give more people with disability access to employment services
- changed income-support arrangements for people with disability to provide more incentives to engage in work
- established Jobs Services Australia and succeeded in placing more than 680,000 Australians into jobs
- introduced stricter rules for job seekers that are focused on encouraging greater participation and engagement
- improved incentives in the tax system. The change to the Low Income Tax Offset will mean more immediate rewards to work for low and middle-income earners. Phasing out the Dependent Spouse Tax Offset for taxpayers with a dependent spouse who turned 40 on or after 1 July 2011 will reduce disincentives to work
- invested \$3 billion in a new Building Australia's Future Workforce package. This package provides immediate skills assistance to industry and apprentices and sets the path for meeting medium-term skills needs. It complements the new assistance and responsibilities for groups with lower participation levels to take up work.

Industrial relations

We have:

- abolished the hated WorkChoices laws that stripped away pay and conditions and have replaced them with a balanced industrial relation system that returns fairness to our workplaces
- created an industrial system that works well, with low unemployment, sustainable wage growth, low levels of industrial disputation and record levels of collective agreement making
- ended AWA individual contracts that undermined the pay and conditions of hardworking Australians established Fair Work Australia, an independent umpire to help employees and employers resolve disputes at the workplace
- broadened the definition of pay equity so that it did not simply provide equal pay for equal work but provided equal pay for work of equal or comparable value, so that discrimination does not have to be proved as grounds for bringing a case forward
- provided a fair, relevant and enforceable minimum safety net for Australian employees comprising ten National Employment Standards and a modern award system
- introduced an obligation to bargain in good faith and a new 'better off overall' test to make sure workplace agreements leave workers better off
- restored protection from unfair dismissal to 2.8 million Australians. Seven million employees are now eligible for unfair dismissal, compared with 4.2 million under WorkChoices
- streamlined and strengthened general protections for workers with the freedom to choose to be represented in the workplace.

Labor priorities

From welfare to work

21 Despite strong economic growth, not all groups and regions are sharing equally in rising prosperity. Jobless families, single parents, disengaged young people and people with disability can all benefit from the opportunities provided by a strong economy. Labor is assisting more Australians to participate through a combination of incentives, supports and responsibilities. Labor has introduced measures to get more Australians into the workforce or to undertake activities that will improve their future employment prospects. Labor is improving incentives to work by:

- rewarding work through fairer income tests and employer incentives
- providing new opportunities to encourage more people into work through training, education, childcare and employment services
- introducing new requirements for teenage parents, long-term unemployed people and Disability Support Pension recipients
- introducing new approaches to address entrenched disadvantage in targeted locations.

22 Labor is also improving workforce participation by:

- connecting people with jobs to support unemployed job seekers to relocate
- investing in more help for mature age workers to provide up to \$4000 to mature age people undertaking skills assessment and training to support up-skilling
- introducing stricter rules for job seekers to increase engagement with employment services.

- 23 Labor is restructuring income support for single parents to promote and support participation. From 1 January 2013, single parents on Newstart Allowance will get to keep an extra \$3900 per year through a more generous income test. At the same time, grandfathering will be phased out for Parenting Payment recipients when their child turns 12 to more closely align their eligibility with other recipients. Labor will also provide extra support for single parents including through training and career advice.
- 24 Labor is reforming participation requirements for Disability Support Pension recipients aged under 35 years with an assessed work capacity of eight hours or more per week. Labor is also increasing the number of hours recipients can work and remain eligible for the Disability Support Pension. We are also making the Disability Support Pension assessment process more rigorous and accurate. Higher wage subsidies are also being introduced to reward employers who hire people with disability for at least 15 hours per week.
- 25 Labor is supporting more young people into work, education or training through:
- extending 'Earn or Learn' requirements to those aged 21, part of broader changes to Youth Allowance
 - funding activities for Early School Leavers to help them develop basic employability skills
 - increasing Family Tax Benefit Part A for dependent 16–19 year olds in full time secondary study, to help families meet costs and support their teenagers to stay in school
 - a new Indigenous Youth Career Pathways Program that will provide school-based traineeships to help the transition from school into further education or work.
- 26 Labor is not giving up on people who have been out of the labour market for a long time. Labor is providing wage assistance to reward employers who give a very long-term unemployed person a job and is funding increased work experience requirements from six months to 11 months a year.
- 27 The benefits of economic growth are uneven and entrenched disadvantage is concentrated in some areas. Labor is taking a new approach to disadvantaged locations. In ten locations, teenage parents on income support will have to agree to a participation plan focused on the parent attaining Year 12 and school readiness for their children. Jobless families in these locations with young children will be required to participate in interviews and workshops to improve school and employment readiness. Labor is also extending income management to five more sites and is trialling innovative service delivery.
- 28 Labor will continue to implement major reforms to employment services, to provide greater access to assistance and more support for job seekers to gain the skills needed to fill vacancies. Labor will also provide a greater focus on individualised and personalised employment services, ensuring that job seekers have pathways to employment that suit their circumstances and needs.
- 29 Labor will put in place new incentives to ensure job seekers are equipped with the quality skills and training required to meet the labour needs of employers. Labor's employment services policies will work in conjunction with training policies and programs, with additional new training places targeted towards those sectors of the economy which are experiencing ongoing skills shortages, enabling redundant workers to retrain in areas of skill need.

Paid parental leave

- 30 Australia's first national Paid Parental Leave scheme was introduced by this Labor government on 1 January 2011. Australia's first national Paid Parental Leave scheme is helping new parents stay connected with the workplace when they take time off to care for a baby. Labor recognises the new dynamics of Australian families—mothers wanting the flexibility to move in and out of the workforce as they have their children, fathers wanting a more hands on role in raising their families.
- 31 Labor's Paid Parental Leave scheme supports eligible parents to receive up to 18 weeks Paid Parental Leave at the National Minimum Wage, currently around \$590 per week, giving them the financial security to take time off work to spend with their newborn babies. The scheme is available to full-time workers, casual workers, part-time workers, the self employed and contractors and parents have the flexibility to transfer or share leave between them.
- 32 Labor recognises that Paid Parental Leave also assists employers to retain skilled staff. A national paid parental scheme is helping boost productivity, allowing parents to maintain their skills, maintain a connection to their profession and workplaces, and transition from work life to family life more easily. This national Paid Parental Leave scheme has brought Australia into line with the rest of the developed world and secured a new benefit that will help new mothers, working families, and the national economy.
- 33 Labor is building on Australia's first, national Paid Parental Leave scheme by expanding the scheme to include a dedicated payment for fathers and other partners. Eligible working fathers and other partners will have access to two weeks Fathers and Partner Pay at the national minimum wage, which is currently about \$590 a week before tax for a child born or adopted from 1 January 2013. This new entitlement will give father and other partners financial support to take time off work to support new mothers and be involved in the care of their new baby right from the start.
- 34 Labor believes that childcare and parental leave are important means of removing barriers to entry to work and of boosting productivity for working people of child bearing age. Labor will seek to ensure that parents have access to affordable and quality childcare, and in doing so will consider what taxation, superannuation, work and industry arrangements are optimal for that purpose.
- 35 Labor will encourage employers and employees to adopt flexible working arrangements to accommodate unpaid caring work.
- 36 Labor will encourage more employers to top up the earnings of workers receiving Paid Parental Leave so that they can enjoy their regular income and entitlements while on parental leave.

Investing in skills and social mobility

- 37 Labor believes education and training is the bedrock of increased social mobility in Australia. Through acquiring knowledge and skills, our citizens can improve their work opportunities and their living standards, and contribute to a more prosperous, productive Australia.
- 38 Our Building Australia's Future Workforce package is putting industry at the heart of the training effort to help meet emerging skills shortages. Central to this package is a National Workforce Development Fund that will deliver around 130,000 high-quality training places directly tailored to industry needs. The training will require co-investment from industry, recognising the shared responsibility for training between the government and industry.

- 39 The fund will be supported by the establishment of the new National Workforce and Productivity Agency from 1 July 2012. The agency will work closely with industry to identify skills needs and build a more skilled and capable workforce.
- 40 Labor has a fresh vision for skills—a high-quality and responsive training system that meets the longer term labour demand needs and sustains economic growth. Labor is setting tougher new reform standards through the National Agreements for Skills and Workforce Development. This will include increasing the focus on higher level training and aligning effort with economic needs.
- 41 We are also investing in a smarter apprenticeship scheme that works for more Australians. While many Australians start an apprenticeship, less than half of those complete them. Labor is providing funding to support mentoring, progression and completions. An expansion of the Apprenticeship Access Program will also assist vulnerable job seekers to take on an apprenticeship. Labor is also investing in services to improve the basic employment skills of jobs seekers which will provide 30,000 additional places in the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program. Labor is committed to attracting and retaining apprentices. Labor recognises that current wage structures are an impediment to attracting and maintaining apprentices and supports a review of those arrangements through Fair Work Australia's review of training wages.
- 42 Labor has also committed to delivering:
- 130,000 more quality training places—industry-driven, to better match skills with demand
 - updated apprenticeships—with \$101 million in funding to mentor apprentices and changes to the system to let apprentices progress as their skills increase, rather than time served
 - reforms to make work pay for jobseekers with a disability and single parents, by allowing them to keep more of their payment if they work more
 - removing the incentive for young people to go on income support early—because we believe they should either be learning or earning
 - funding wage subsidies for the long term unemployed and disabled—along with extending work experience and work for the dole to 11 out of 12 months of the year for those who have not worked for more than two years.

Indigenous economic development and participation

- 43 Labor has committed to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians by 2018.
- 44 Labor is committed to improving employment opportunities and the job readiness of Indigenous Australians. Labor has reformed the employment services system, the Community Development Employment Projects program and the Indigenous Employment Program to ensure more Indigenous Australians have the skills needed to gain employment. Labor will support government programs that create more economic development opportunities for Indigenous Australians, including using government purchasing to connect Indigenous Australians with those opportunities.
- 45 Labor supports those Indigenous leaders who have called for an end to the cycle of welfare dependency and for new approaches to Indigenous economic development and participation.
- 46 Labor is committed to building and supporting the economic independence of Indigenous Australians and through our Indigenous Economic Development Strategy will provide a pathway for Indigenous Australians to have the same opportunities as all Australians—to get an education, find a job or start their own business, own their own home and provide for their families.

- 47 Labor is committed to driving up Indigenous employment rates, and is achieving good results through the Job Services Australia system, reform of the Community Development Employment Projects program and Indigenous Employment Program.
- 48 Labor believes in supporting Indigenous business and is leading the way through procurement reform, building both individual and community wealth as well as supporting the employment of Indigenous Australians.
- 49 Labor will:
- support 100,000 Indigenous Australians to find and keep a job by 2018 to meet our Closing the Gap target
 - reform employment and participation services in remote areas to ensure that those who are able to work are supported to train and find work
 - reform welfare services to require those who are able, to seek and accept employment
 - work with businesses, including in remote communities, to create employment and training opportunities for Indigenous Australians
 - ensure that participation programs in remote communities focus on skill-formation and are not a substitute for real employment
 - support the growth of the Indigenous business sector
 - ensure that the Council of Australian Governments investment is used to leverage Indigenous employment and business outcomes.

People with disability and mental illness

- 50 Labor is also creating incentives and opportunities for people with disability to participate in the paid workforce, through engagement with the private and non-government sectors.
- 51 Labor is implementing a national mental health and disability employment strategy, outlining measures to help increase the employment rates of Australians with mental health conditions and disabilities, including giving priority to employment programs specifically designed to work in close collaboration with the mental health and disability services.
- 52 Labor has undertaken significant reform of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) to reward effort and initiative for those who can work, and to ease the pressure on the system which supports those who can't.
- we have streamlined assessment processes and are now fast-tracking people who are clearly or manifestly eligible due to a profound disability or terminal illness—so they receive financial help quickly and aren't bogged down by unnecessary assessments
 - we have introduced more rigorous assessment procedures for people, whose circumstances aren't clear cut, introducing compulsory interviews and participation plans for people on disability support pension who are under 35 who are able to work at least eight hours a week, so that we can support them on the path to employment
 - we are re-writing the old and out-of-date medical tables used to rate the severity of a person's impairment, which were last reviewed in 1993. From January 2012 the impairment tables used to assess the extent of disability will focus more on what a person can do rather than what they can't
 - we have removed the cap on access to disability employment services
 - we are investing an extra \$50 million in personal helpers and mentors to work jointly with employment services to help DSP and other income support recipients with mental illness into the workforce

- we are providing greater incentives for disability pensioners to give work a go, by allowing DSP recipients to work up to 30 hours a week without losing their pension
- we are working with employers through new wage subsidy programs to create more job opportunities specifically for people with disabilities to help break down the barriers to employment.

53 Labor recognises that Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (CRS) Australia plays an important role in providing a comprehensive service assisting job seekers with a disability or mental illness nationally. Labor is committed to ensuring that the Commonwealth remains a key provider of these services and to CRS Australia remaining a viable Commonwealth entity.

Creating fair workplaces

54 Labor's commitment to fairness in the workplace is reflected in its commitment to a fair, relevant and enforceable safety net for all working people, the right to organise and representation, the right to collective bargaining in good faith, the right to equal pay for work of equal or comparable value, protection from discrimination in employment, protection from unfair dismissal, entitlement to redundancy pay, security of entitlements and access to an independent umpire to assist in resolving disputes. These measures are important to ensuring that the Australian belief in the fair go is reflected in our working lives.

55 Labor will build on the foundations it established through the abolition of WorkChoices and the building of a new, fair and flexible industrial relations system that has stopped Australian Workplace Agreements, introduced "the better off overall" test that protects employees from losing basic entitlements without compensation, and built a decent safety net.

56 At the foundation of Australia's workplace relations system is the right for employees to organise into a trade union, and to join together to bargain in good faith for decent pay and conditions, generally at the enterprise level or by agreement with more than one employer. Labor believes this is the best means to ensure fair and productive workplace relations, providing flexibility for both employers and employees. Recognising that one size does not fit all, Labor has also provided the flexibility for employers who have an especially close connection to apply to bargain together. However, recognising that bargaining at the enterprise level is not always efficient, possible or appropriate, Labor has provided scope for multi-employer bargaining, Labor has ensured that working Australians can bargain collectively about all matters relevant to their working lives.

57 Labor also understands that for most workers, their individual bargaining power is limited and that their best chance for achieving fair and decent outcomes is to combine with their fellow workers and act collectively to advance their interests. Labor is committed to a workplace relations system that supports and respects the role of trade unions in our nation's workplaces especially the work of the union delegate. Labor supports measures to ensure delegates are able to organise and effectively represent employees, including paid training leave.

58 Labor believes in the fundamental right of employees to organise and to bargain collectively. Where a majority of employees want to bargain, employers must respect this. Once a bargaining process has commenced, all parties must engage in bargaining in good faith. While responsibility for resolving disagreements should exist at the workplace level, the independent umpire will be able to enforce orders to bargain in good faith. Labor believes all employees and employers, in every workplace, are entitled to the same basic rights and responsibilities.

59 Labor supports the system of modern industry awards that has provided relevant minimum standards for Australian workers. Labor is committed to a modern award system that is simpler and more relevant to the workplaces of the 21st century, while also addressing the needs of workers in different industries and occupations.

- 60 Labor believes that the primary responsibility for resolving disputes about the operation of agreements resides with those covered by an agreement. Labor will support the inclusion of genuine dispute resolution procedures in agreements to deal with those circumstances where such disputes cannot be resolved through discussion, conciliation or mediation.
- 61 Labor is committed to helping young parents with raising children and assisting in managing work and family responsibilities, through the provision of paid parental leave, rights to unpaid parental leave of up to two years, the right to request working on a part-time basis or other flexible work arrangements and the right to work reasonable but not excessive hours.
- 62 Labor also recognises that although some parents would prefer to stay at home and care for their children on a full-time basis when their children are pre-school age, many cannot afford this option. Labor will work to ensure that parents can exercise this choice. Labor recognises that employees with caring responsibilities for other dependants require assistance in managing their work and caring roles. Labor will examine the desirability of extending flexible work entitlements to all carers.
- 63 Labor will strive to ensure that the right to request changes to working arrangements to meet caring responsibilities is equitable for all employees. Labor is committed to ensuring that the right to request provisions operate effectively and will consider evidence and options for further enhancements where employers unreasonably refuse employee requests for changes to working arrangements to meet their caring responsibilities.
- 64 Labor acknowledges the fact that low paid workers in key industries often do not have access to bargaining or are not able to benefit from bargaining, Labor is committed to a low-paid bargaining stream in which workers who are substantially reliant on the safety net are able to participate in bargaining, with the involvement of third parties where relevant, through a special authorisation from the independent umpire.
- 65 Recognising the opportunity which collective bargaining provides to build fair, productive and rewarding workplaces, Labor agrees that the post-implementation review of the Fair Work Act should also consider the need for possible amendments to the Act to increase the take up of bargaining in those workplaces and/or industry sectors which currently do not have enterprise agreements or have low levels of bargaining.
- 66 Labor recognises the importance of job and income security for working people and in ensuring a stronger and fairer society. Labor is committed to ensuring that Australia's workplace relations system balances the needs of business with the important social and economic need of creating and sustaining good, secure jobs. In particular, employees should not bear an unfair share of the risks associated with changes in industries or sectors.
- 67 Labor is committed to the maintenance of Fair Work Australia and the Fair Work Ombudsman to ensure that workplace laws are understood and implemented. Labor believes these bodies should provide practical, quick and low-cost assistance to help employers and employees understand their rights and responsibilities.
- 68 In delivering a modern workplace relations system, Labor will:
- continue to work with state governments to achieve referrals of power or other forms of harmonisation to achieve a truly national workplace relations system for the private sector
 - undertake education activities to ensure employers and employees understand and comply with their rights and obligations under the new system, including programs directed at young workers and people living in regional and rural areas

- support the provision of education and training to employers, employees and trade unions aimed at achieving cooperative and harmonious workplace relations, improved workplace productivity and effective resolution of disputes at the workplace level
- examine additional measures to support the activities of workplace delegates in dispute resolution, bargaining, skills development and productivity improvements as well as access to information and support from their trade union in the workplace
- consider additional measures to promote and ensure good faith bargaining in workplaces including the development of guidelines on good faith conduct in negotiations that allow access to and assistance from the independent umpire to resolve disputes
- promote better skilled and secure jobs through industry driven workforce development research and planning. Labor will establish the new Productivity and Workforce Development Agency as an authority on workforce development policy advice and to conduct skills and workforce research, including into the quality and security of jobs and the future working life in Australia
- ensure that all employees and employers have equal access to assistance from the independent umpire to resolve disputes, including disputes about the making and operation of agreements, and including by requiring that dispute resolution procedures in agreements provide for arbitration as the final stage where such disputes cannot be resolved through discussion, conciliation or mediation
- recognising that the speedy and effective resolution of disputes is an essential feature of any fair and flexible workplace relations system, the review of the Fair Work Act will consider whether the independent umpire requires additional powers to deal with protracted and/or intractable bargaining disputes and there is no reasonable prospect of reaching agreement, including in relation to the making of workplace determinations
- ensure that the current operation and scope of modern awards, collective agreements and contracts of employment are sufficient to ensure that workers have the enforceable protections of the relevant industrial instrument regardless of the legal identity of their employer
- strengthen the laws which prohibit sham contracting
- work with trade unions and employers to ensure that employees have access to adequate information on their workplace rights, relevant industrial agreements, occupational health and safety and other employment information
- work with trade unions and employers to ensure employers respect all workers' right to join a union without hindrance or discrimination, and assist with workers joining through utilisation of modern payment methods such as direct debit
- work with state and territory governments to achieve a national minimum standard for long service leave to form part of the National Employment Standards and facilitate schemes that provide portability of entitlements between employer
- work with state and territory governments to ensure consistent treatment of public holidays, including the issue of the treatment of Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day where they fall on weekends
- seek to address the gender pay gap, which remains unacceptably high. In particular when Fair Work Australia is conducting periodic reviews of modern awards it will be required to take into account the principle of pay equity
- encourage secure work, reasonable hours of work and work arrangements that assist employees to meet their family responsibilities
- encourage and support employers and unions to develop working time arrangements that are consistent with employees' preferences and needs, reduce excessive working hours, maximise employment creation and help employees meet their family responsibilities
- provide wage levels for apprentices and trainees that fairly balance the need for a living wage with the need to encourage employers to train the next generation of skilled employees

- consult and work with trade unions, employers and community organisations to remove obstacles to the employment of people with disabilities
- protect vulnerable seafarers in the coasting trade and promote fair labour standards in the Australian shipping industry
- support the work of the International Labour Organization, particularly within our region, to improve international labour standards and champion respect for internationally recognised workplace rights
- abolish the Australian Building and Construction Commission and ensure that the new Fair Work Building Inspectorate provides a balanced and effective compliance regime, which will provide procedural and substantive fairness to all parties in the construction industry.

69 Labor recognises that industrial tribunals have traditionally provided a low cost forum to resolve day to day workplace grievances. Labor's regime of dispute settlement provides for assistance from Fair Work Australia, informal small claims procedures in the courts and enforceable undertakings to the Fair Work Ombudsman to ensure that effective, low-cost, informal and prompt resolution of disputes continues as a feature of our workplace laws.

70 Labor will in consultation with business, unions and other stakeholders monitor the implementation of its workplace relations laws in practice to:

- address any unintended consequences
- measure their effectiveness in promoting cooperative and productive workplaces and fairness and representation at work
- monitor the operation of the laws to ensure the use of individual flexibility arrangements are mutually beneficial.

Outworkers

71 Labor recognises the disadvantaged position of outworkers in the Textile, Clothing and Footwear sector. Outworkers require specific regulatory protection in order to control the exploitative conditions under which they are employed.

72 Labor is committed to urgently securing the passage into law of the *Fair Work Amendment (TCF Industry) Bill 2011* in order to provide that outworkers are employed under secure, safe and fair systems of work by ensuring:

- outworkers will have nationally consistent rights to legal redress and protection that are of no lesser standard than that currently applying in state outworker legislation
- an end to the artificial distinction between so called 'employee' outworkers and 'contract' outworkers by deeming all outworkers to be employees
- that the special Right of Entry provisions regarding Outwork in the TCF industry apply to sweatshop workers.

73 In order to participate and take a lead role in global efforts to end the exploitation of home-based workers, Labor will accede to the ILO-C177 Home Work Convention, 1996, Convention Concerning Home Work.

A national agenda for workplace safety and workers' compensation

74 Labor is committed to building on the significant progress that has been made towards establishing national Occupational Health and Safety laws.

75 Labor will advance its workplace safety agenda through Safe Work Australia, the national body overseeing the development of model Occupational Health and Safety laws.

- 76 Labor believes that every workplace injury is preventable and is committed to the highest possible standard of workplace safety and will support industry, employers, trade unions and workers to reduce workplace risk, hazards and injury.
- 77 Labor will work cooperatively with the states and territories to harmonise Occupational Health and Safety frameworks, including the Commonwealth's own activities, to reflect best health and safety practice within Australia consistent with the best international standards.
- 78 Labor believes that injured workers must be supported by a compensation scheme that is both fair and financially sound. To achieve this, Labor is committed to improving the Comcare scheme to ensure that injured workers have appropriate Workers' Compensation coverage and benefits.
- 79 Where the Commonwealth already regulates private sector Occupational Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation in the shipping, offshore oil and gas, and stevedoring industries, Labor will make further efforts to eliminate regulatory uncertainty and dual jurisdictional involvement in consultation with states and territories and key industry stakeholders recognising the potential of a national regulatory framework.
- 80 Labor will work with farm organisations, unions and across governments to develop tripartite codes of practice for workplace safety on farms, fishing vessels and in forests. Where codes fail to improve safety on farms, government will introduce appropriate regulation. Labor also supports research into farm safety and supports measures to raise the profile of farm safety.
- 81 Labor notes there is evidence of a clear link between certain commercial practices in the road transport industry and poor safety outcomes. Low rates of pay and practices such as fining drivers for missing delivery slots contribute to excessive driving hours, overloading and speeding. The resulting vehicle accidents bring trauma and cost to the entire community.
- 82 Labor welcomes the government's decision to enact legislation for the Road Safety Remuneration System to protect owner drivers and employees in the road transport industry by working with the industry to implement reforms that will establish and maintain safe rates, conditions and payment systems for employees and owner drivers. The system will be able to respond to changes in industry conditions and will provide an effective means of resolving disputes. The system will cover all parties in the transport supply chain and be accompanied by a strong and effective education and enforcement regime.
- 83 Labor is committed to tripartite oversight of Workers' Compensation and workplace safety systems and will ensure that trade unions, governments and employers are appropriately represented. In light of the terrible legacy that asbestos has had on the Australian community, Labor is committed to the development of a national strategy and plan to improve asbestos awareness, management and removal from the built environment. The government has established the Asbestos Management Review to develop the strategy.
- 84 Labor will work with states and territories to ensure all Australians workers are protected from exposure to asbestos related disease (ARD). Labor will also work in a co-operative manner with international labour organisations and countries to ensure workers across the world are protected from ARD.
- 85 Labor will work to ensure that the regulation of all chemicals in Australia is consistent, and reflects world best practice, in order to provide the highest level of protection to the community, workers, and the environment. To this end, Labor will ensure the efficient and timely assessment of all chemicals, and require safety data to be complete, up to date, and comprehensive (including the nano forms of bulk chemicals). Labor will also work toward ensuring that risks posed by chemicals are reduced.

Protecting the entitlements of all employees

- 86 Labor believes that times of economic uncertainty underscore the need for adequate social safety nets and for the protection of employee entitlements.
- 87 Labor believes that all employees should be protected from unfair dismissal, not only to prevent workers being sacked for no good reason, but also because giving supervisors and employers the right to hire or fire at whim tilts the balance of power in the workplace against employees and can contribute to a culture of intimidation and bullying.
- 88 Labor believes that employees have a basic right to redundancy pay, as reflected in the National Employment Standards and subject to variation in awards or enterprise agreements. Redundancy pay can cushion individuals and families from the immediate financial impact of the loss of work and are especially important during a period of economic downturn.
- 89 The Global Financial Crisis and subsequent developments also underscore the importance of the protection of employee entitlements in circumstances of company collapse.
- 90 Labor is committed to the implementation of a fair and enforceable scheme that provides the most effective mechanism to protect all employee entitlements. To protect employees from the risk of market and company failure, Labor will:
- Legislate to give effect to the Fair Entitlements Guarantee which protects workers' entitlements to redundancy pay (up to four weeks per year) and all annual leave, notice long service leave and up to three months unpaid wages
 - introduce an improved ranking of employee entitlements relative to other creditors, ensuring that employers and directors meet their responsibilities, and ensure that any burden placed on taxpayers is reasonable
 - make additional amendments to corporations law to ensure compliance in relation to the recovery of employee entitlements including prohibitions on corporate or director conduct undertaken to or which has the effect of preventing recovery
 - ensure there is an obligation on employers to make proper provisions for employee entitlements
 - take special steps to protect those most vulnerable to the GFC — school leavers, apprentices and trainees, the newly unemployed (especially older people), the long-term unemployed and those in vulnerable regions
 - continue to develop mechanisms to protect workers superannuation
 - provide new training opportunities to Australians who are vulnerable to unemployment
 - encourage and support employers, trade unions and employees to work together to find creative and flexible ways of supporting jobs and keeping employees in work during the global economic recession.
- 91 Labor laws will ensure that a transfer of business, corporate restructure, phoenixing or insourcing or outsourcing arrangements are not able to be used as a means of avoiding the obligations in an enterprise agreement or modern award or the Fair Work Act.
- 92 Labor will facilitate schemes that provide portability of leave entitlements between employers where those entitlements would otherwise be lost to the employee.

Chapter 6: New opportunities for an ageing Australia

Introduction

- 1 Over the last century, average life expectancy has increased by more than 20 years owing to the success of public health policy and huge leaps in medical research. The ageing of Australia's population is also a profound social shift that requires an equally profound shift in society's mindset about age. The ageing of our population should not be perceived as a problem or an inconvenience; it is an historical achievement that humanity has strived for over centuries and presents a range of economic and social opportunities. Australians can now expect to have an extended period of healthy, active retirement that was unimaginable in the past. This development is something that all Australians should be proud of and is an achievement that should be celebrated. The challenge is to make sure that as we live longer, we continue to lead happy, healthy and productive lives. Older Australians have much to contribute to business, to education and to the community and we need to do more to encourage these contributions beyond retirement.
- 2 Labor is committed to promoting healthier lifestyles for older Australians, encouraging skills development and removing obstacles to workforce participation, to support better planning for an extended period of middle life. Organisations will benefit from more flexible work environments that improve workforce retention and from capitalising on commercial opportunities to develop new products and services for an older population. The nation will benefit as we develop a society that celebrates the contribution and capacities of older Australians.
- 3 Labor recognises that older Australians have made our country strong and prosperous and they deserve to be valued and respected within our society and through our policies and actions. With older Australians leading longer, healthier and more prosperous lives than ever before, it is essential that we look carefully at how to provide the best possible opportunities for older Australians. There is great potential to provide older Australians with greater choice and control over their lives than has been afforded in the past.
- 4 Labor believes in a fair and equitable society where Australians who have contributed to our nation's strength and prosperity are able to lead a healthy and productive life whether they are in work, retirement, volunteering or caring roles.
- 5 Labor has been protecting the pension for more than 100 years. And we have delivered for older Australians—meeting our responsibility to ensure that no Australian is left behind. Supporting pensioners today, and providing security for tomorrow. Through our pension reforms, Labor has built a sustainable pension system.
- 6 Labor has a strong history in protecting the financial future of Australians through a commitment to a robust superannuation system. We introduced universal superannuation 20 years ago and we have since committed to further increases and greater protections. We will continue to retain the goal of ensuring financial security in retirement as a core component in Labor policy.
- 7 Labor recognises that our community increasingly relies on the volunteering efforts of older Australians, both in the community and within families. Volunteering in any capacity helps to keep older Australians connected to their community and to feel valued. Our business, education and community lives can benefit enormously from the contribution of older Australians and provides us with an opportunity to foster a richer civil society.

- 8 One of the great challenges ahead of us is maximising the benefits and opportunities that come with a larger and more active population of older Australians. Labor has established the first Advisory Panel on the Economic Potential of Senior Australians to ensure these considerations are injected into a range of contemporary policy debates, such as the opportunities created by the NBN for senior Australians. The panel will report in late 2012, and its recommendations will improve the design of policies that affect senior Australians.
- 9 The Broadband for Seniors program is only one example of an initiative already in place to deliver older Australians a better quality of life. The program helps build the confidence and skills needed to use new technology, so they can participate in and share the benefits of the growing digital economy. Older Australians can access this initiative through kiosks at community centres, retirement villages, nursing facilities, libraries and community clubs. Free training is provided in a friendly face-to-face environment by volunteer tutors. Access to training materials including an online development course are also provided so people can learn at their own pace as well as on their computers at home.
- 10 In 2010 Labor tasked the Productivity Commission to provide an analysis of the aged care sector and detailed proposals for aged care reform. These recommendations have been received and will be considered alongside the recommendations from community and industry consultations as part of the broader ageing agenda. Labor is committed to the reform of aged care and this will need a sustained commitment over many years to meet the needs of older Australians through more flexible, appropriate and person centred services.
- 11 Labor recognises the needs of ageing populations in regional communities and is committed to the provision of aged care, health services and appropriate community facilities in these areas.

Labor values

- 12 Labor believes the ageing of the population should be seen as a significant success, with opportunities to be harnessed by both the individual and society more broadly.
- 13 Since the federation of our nation, Labor has believed in the need for a strong age pension for Australia. Labor introduced the age pension during our nation's first decade driven by our core Labor belief in a fair society that rewards a lifetime of work and our sense of responsibility to ensure that no Australian is left behind.
- 14 We believe in ensuring Australians enjoy financial security in retirement and deliver on this value through continued commitment to improving superannuation.
- 15 Labor believes that employees should be able to access low cost, profit for member (not-for-profit) superannuation funds through their workplace.
- 16 Labor is committed to ensuring older Australians are able to lead a healthy and productive life in retirement with access to the care and support appropriate to their needs.
- 17 Older Australians are a core part of Australia's social fabric and deserve greater choice and control over their lives. Labor is committed to providing older Australians with more flexible and appropriate opportunities to engage in all aspects of life.
- 18 Labor understands that volunteering and mentoring make valuable contributions to Australia's economic and social wellbeing.

Labor achievements

Health and wellbeing

We have:

- undertaken significant reform to our health system to bolster our primary care and preventative care services on the ground to keep people out of hospital, to help people stay well in their community and to ensure the health and wellbeing of Australians as they age
- committed to reforming our aged care system as part of a broader positive ageing agenda, following on from the Productivity Commission's report 'Caring for Older Australians'
- increased residential and community aged care places and increased transition care places to assist frail older Australians to leave hospital earlier each year.

Further education and employment

We have:

- established an Advisory Panel on the Economic Potential of Senior Australians to ensure the potential of older members of our community is considered in a range of policy debates
- introduced the Experience Plus program to provide more support to older Australians who want to stay in the workforce longer, with additional training opportunities and more support for mature workers with a health condition
- introduced a new and improved Work Bonus that will provide a further incentive for older Australians to work by allowing pensioners to keep more of their pension and more of their wage when they do choose to work. Eligible pensioners can earn up to \$250 a fortnight without it being assessed as income under the pension income test
- established 2000 internet kiosks (reaching about 160,000 seniors) across Australia to provide older Australians with free access to computers and the internet, as well as training in information technology skills
- job seekers and workers over 45 years of age are now eligible for free, professional career advice to help them plan for successful career transitions.

Financial

We have:

- since September 2009, driven significant increases in the pension, especially for singles. On top of the historic increases in the base rate of the pension, new and more generous indexation arrangements make sure that the pension keeps in step with the financial needs of pensioners
- made economic stimulus payments to more than three million pensioners and self-funded retirees to fend off the impact of the Global Financial Crisis
- made pension payments more flexible—so that the system better meets the changing needs of pensioners. The new pension supplement can be paid fortnightly or quarterly, and more flexible advance payments can be made to meet unexpected costs
- ensure older Australians who do not receive the age pension can be supported through the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card. Labor has introduced a new Seniors Supplement for seniors health card holders

- delivered national transport concessions so that state Seniors Card holders get concessions when they travel interstate
- supported older Australians prepare for a clean energy future by ensuring that pensioners receive increased pension payments that meet the expected average price impact from the introduction of the carbon price. Self-funded retirees with a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card will receive the same assistance as age pensioners as the carbon price is introduced.

Support

We have:

- created a separate Age Discrimination Commissioner, who will drive community debate about ageing discrimination while also dealing with complaints of discrimination
- continued the role of the Ambassador for Ageing to participate in major events and promote key messages on the substantial and ongoing contribution of older people and the importance of productive and healthy ageing
- introduced one-on-one support to grandparent carers in the form of grandparent advisers to help older Australians who are the primary carers for their grandchildren apply for government support such as family assistance and income support payments.

Labor priorities

- 19 Labor is committed to fostering the full participation of older Australians in work and community life. Labor will:

Health and wellbeing

- develop policies and practice to foster inclusion of older people in all aspects of life, including education, work and social environments
- reform the aged care system to ensure appropriate quality care is available and provided when required, recognising the desires and preferences of older Australians
- develop strategies to address the workforce challenges in the aged care system
- develop a wellbeing framework, to guide the development of future aged care policy that promotes independence, wellness and the continuing contribution of older Australians to society
- invest in prevention and primary care to keep older Australians well and out of hospital
- deliver eHealth solutions to assist older Australians, in their home and in aged care facilities, access services including the personally controlled electronic health record and TeleHealth services for specialist medical care.

Education and employment

- help senior Australians gain financial literacy and provide information, education and support to seniors on post-retirement incomes, superannuation and financial products
- assist seniors gain confidence and build skills in Information and Communications Technology through education and the availability of appropriate public resources
- commit to programs such as The Golden Gurus Program which provides Australians aged 50 years and over with a range of opportunities to assist community organisations and small businesses
- provide support and assistance for those entering the later phase of their working life to ensure they are fully supported to pursue new opportunities, change direction or slow down their careers.

Financial

- ensure the age pension keeps pace with the cost of living through improved indexation arrangements that make pension rates more responsive to the price changes experienced by pensioners
- maintain the benchmark of maximum single adult rates of aged, disability and carers pensions to at least 27.7 per cent of male total average weekly earnings and ensure basic rates are indexed at least twice a year in line with movements in the Consumer Price Index or the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index
- ensure that those whose only income is provided through the social security system will not have to pay income tax
- boost superannuation savings to ensure Australians can enjoy their retirement
- recognise the important contribution that self-funded retirees have made and continue to make to the Australian economy and to their communities by providing targeted support and incentives
- continue to implement progressive reform of the pension system to provide more financial security for seniors.

Engagement

- continue to engage with representatives from seniors' groups prior to introducing any new reforms and recognise the importance of seniors' community organisations through its communities policy and social inclusion agenda
- recognise the valuable contribution that mature age people make to Australian communities and business and to raise awareness among these citizens and the community of the benefits of skilled volunteering and small business mentoring
- commit to increasing the number of people who participate in volunteering and mentoring roles and the availability of volunteering and mentoring opportunities for older Australians.

Pensions

- 20 Labor has delivered for pensioners, driven by our belief in a fair society that rewards a lifetime of work. We will continue to deliver pension increases through regular generous indexation and improvements in a long-term, sustainable way by gradually increasing the age pension age starting in 2017, rising to 67 by 2023. This will allow people to have time to plan and prepare for this change. We will continue to protect the rate of the pension into the future, by keeping Australian pensioners front and centre of reforms.
- 21 Under Labor, pensions will keep up with the rising cost of living. The wages benchmark rate has increased for singles from 25 per cent to around 27.7 per cent of Male Total Average Weekly Earnings, an increase of more than ten per cent. This new benchmark is now enshrined in legislation. The new Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index considers a 'basket of goods and services' that better reflects pensioner consumption patterns than the overall Consumer Price Index.
- 22 Labor has more than trebled the Utilities Allowance and increased the Telephone Allowance by half and introduced new arrangements to give pensioners easier access to advance payments in times of need.
- 23 Labor has simplified payments to pensioners, combining four allowances into a single, simple Pension Supplement, paid fortnightly. To increase flexibility for pensioners in balancing their household budgets, pensioners can choose to have some of their Pension Supplement paid quarterly instead of fortnightly.
- 24 Pensioners will be supported in this government's plan to put a price on pollution and not pensioners. Under our plan, pensioners will receive household assistance that is more than the expected average price increase from putting a price on pollution. This will be a real and permanent increase to the pension.

Superannuation

- 25 Labor will provide an historic boost to Australian's superannuation savings by:
- increasing the Superannuation Guarantee to 12 per cent commencing 1 July 2013
 - providing an annual contribution of up to \$500 into the superannuation accounts of 3.5 million workers earning less than \$37,000 from 1 July 2012
 - doubling the concessional super contributions cap to \$50,000 for those 50 and over with up to \$500,000 in super from 1 July 2012. This important measure will benefit almost 275,000 older Australians; including those who have had interrupted work patterns or entered the workforce at a later stage
 - enabling workers aged 70 to 74 to receive Superannuation Guarantee Contributions for the first time since the introduction of compulsory superannuation from 1 July 2013
 - improving the efficiency of the super system, including enabling super funds to offer a new low cost superannuation product called MySuper from 1 July 2013.
- 26 Labor's historic superannuation reforms will:
- boost the retirement savings of 8.4 million Australians including many older Australians who benefit in particular from our measures to boost super for the over 50s
 - lift retirement savings by more than \$85 billion over ten years and by more than \$500 billion by 2035
 - provide a 50 per cent tax discount on up to \$1000 of interest income earned on savings products including bank accounts—50 per cent tax break for the first \$500 of interest on savings from 1 July 2012, increasing on 1 July 2013 to \$1000 of interest on savings. This will benefit around 740,000 self-funded retirees and age pensioners when this measure is fully implemented
 - from 1 July 2013, around 8700 self-funded retirees will become eligible for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card and the Seniors Supplement through the introduction of a new standard \$500 tax deduction that reduces taxable incomes
 - older Australians are regular users of financial planners and have also been the victims of poor financial advice. Labor is reforming financial advice to ensure consumers are better protected and also don't pay unnecessary fees. Labor's reforms include a ban on sales commissions paid to financial advisers, a new duty to act in the customer's best interest and a compulsory requirement for advisers to seek approval from their clients to charge ongoing fees.

Ageing and aged care

- 27 In considering the reform and planning to redesign the aged care system for the future, Labor will be guided by four overarching principles:
- every older Australian has earned the right to be able to access quality care that is appropriate to their needs
 - older Australians deserve greater choice and control over their care arrangements than the system currently provides
 - funding arrangements for aged care need to be sustainable and fair, both for older Australians and for the broader community
 - every Australian can access quality care provided by an appropriately skilled and remunerated workforce that meets their needs.
- 28 Labor welcomes the federal government's commitment to legislate for 12 per cent superannuation to be progressively implemented over future years—as well as other significant superannuation reforms. However, noting the significant economic, fiscal and social benefits of superannuation, Labor calls on the government to investigate increasing the target contribution rate to 15 per cent.

- 29 In recognition of the life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Labor understands that early access to preserved superannuation accounts can play an important part in providing support to some individuals and their families. Labor will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on transition to retirement strategies, including access to superannuation, in acknowledgment of these circumstances.
- 30 Labor recognises that the reform process will only be successful if critical issues of workforce and wages are addressed. The work performed by our aged care sector is both vital and difficult.
- 31 The reform process will open up the sector to increased competition, will aim to improve quality of care and will require those who have the capacity to pay to contribute to the services they receive. Within this reform process Labor is committed to ensuring that all older Australians, regardless of wealth or circumstance, are able to access quality care. Labor understands that a reform process that opens up the aged care sector to market forces entails risks for current and future consumers of aged care. Labor is committed to ensuring that all older Australians, regardless of wealth or circumstance are able to access quality care. Labor recognises the importance of strong and effective regulation of the aged care sector in achieving this commitment.
- 32 Ensuring the wellbeing of older Australians is a Labor priority and a wellbeing framework will be developed in consultation with older Australians and the wider community. It will guide the development of future aged care policy that promotes independence, wellness and the continuing contribution of older Australians to society. It will have as its hallmark, a commitment to treating older Australians and their carers with respect and dignity. Labor believes all older Australians have a right to safe and secure aged care services, whether they are received in a residential complex or in the home.
- 33 Many Australians as they age come to rely on the support provided by the aged care sector, services range from low level home support with domestic chores to full residential care. In reforming the aged care sector Labor will seek to align services with the needs and preferences of older Australians.
- 34 Labor will take into account the current ratio system, demographic changes and rural and regional issues to ensure the supply of aged care services appropriately meets current and future demand. Labor is committed to the provision of an adequate number of aged care places offering a high standard of care and subject to relevant regulation.
- 35 Labor recognises that support in the home is vital to meeting the needs of an ageing population and that there is an increasing demand for home support services. Older Australians want to stay in their own homes for the duration of their lives wherever possible. Labor is committed to the provision of services that help older Australians remain independent and in their own homes, close to their family and community wherever possible. Labor recognises that a move towards greater provision of community care is not possible without fair and competitive wages and improved working conditions. Without such conditions, the attraction and retention of staff will be problematic, leading to reduced quality and worsening care outcomes. Labor will continue to invest in community care services to meet these goals.
- 36 Labor is committed to delivering the services older Australians need in their homes and in the community where it is accessible and feasible and will ensure recipients are well supported and have choice of service. Where home support is not possible residential care provides an environment for care particularly for those who are frail and have complex comorbidities requiring care.

- 37 Labor recognises the need to provide culturally appropriate aged care, including strategies that address:
- the propensity of older Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds experiencing dementia to revert to their first language, through provision of culturally appropriate care
 - the experience of discrimination of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex older Australians in aged care based on presumptions of both universal heterosexuality and asexuality in personal relationships between older Australians
 - the need for Indigenous older Australians to maintain contact with their culture and country, however possible.
- 38 Labor recognises the profound grief, suffering and loss experienced by members of the Stolen Generations as a result of forced removals and other past government policies and the need for appropriate aged care services that take into consideration their differing needs. We also understand that for Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants, the impact of childhood experiences in institutions and children homes is ongoing and lasting. These 'care leavers' have special needs in accessing aged care services, particularly residential care and aged care should be responsive and appropriate for their needs.
- 39 Labor acknowledges the importance of staying well and using preventative health measures as we age. It is vital that we tackle the chronic diseases that impact on older Australians.
- 40 Labor recognises the need for competitive wage and entitlement outcomes to assist in the attraction and retention of staff and to lead to better quality of care outcomes. Labor will continue to invest to meet these goals.

Securing quality aged care through a quality workforce

- 41 Labor recognises there is a critical workforce shortage in the residential and community aged care sector. This shortage is attributed to a combination of current workforce structure, training provision and wages. For aged care reform to be successful we must address this workforce shortage. Labor will work with the sector on the development and implementation of an aged care workforce strategy that addresses career pathways, appropriate training pathways, improved management and supervision and wages.
- 42 Labor strongly supports the vital work performed by all staff in the aged care system, including nursing and personal care staff and will seek to address remuneration issues through the aged care reform process. Without changes to the workforce, attraction and retention of staff will continue to be problematic and potentially lead to negative quality and care outcomes.
- 43 Labor recognises that there has been a high level of staff turnover in the aged care sector and is committed to reducing this through a range of mechanisms including competitive and fair wages, better career structures and improved entitlements. Labor is committed to ensuring aged care staff are retained for the long-term.
- 44 Labor recognises and understands that there is a critical workforce shortage in aged care, particularly in mining boom states and remote and rural areas who struggle to compete for qualified staff.
- 45 Labor is committed to developing the workforce and through various programs including the Workforce Development Fund, to assist aged care workers to obtain vocational aged care qualifications. Labor believes that staff should have access to further training to improve and develop their skills. This increase in relevant qualifications should be related to an increase in remuneration, reflecting Labor's belief that the aged care workforce should have fair and competitive wages. Through the National

Workforce Development Fund and other programs including Recognition of Current Competencies programs, Labor will support aged care workers to obtain vocational qualifications that are tied to fair and competitive wage outcomes. While Labor remains committed to the aim that Certificate Level III becomes the mandatory minimum qualification, existing workers should not be disadvantaged.

- 46 Labor believes in transparency and accountability in funding to aged care providers and ensuring that every dollar provided in public funding is directed to ensuring quality of care. Quality care is reliant upon staff being adequately trained, competent to practice and having robust standards and guidelines that determine practice.
- 47 Labor recognises that workforce issues as a key concern to be addressed through the industry reform process. Labor recognises that workforce issues are threshold issues and that a quality aged care system is not possible without fair and competitive wages and decent working conditions. Labor is committed to working with industry stakeholders to achieve sector reforms including properly benchmarked rates of pay delivered through appropriate industrial instruments.
- 48 Labor understands that the federal government is the primary funder of the aged care sector and consequently exercises control over wage rates and working conditions. Labor also recognises the structural barriers aged care workers face when bargaining for better wage outcomes. Labor is committed to fair and competitive wages and conditions for aged care workers delivered through a open and sustainable pricing system.

Dementia

- 49 Dementia is a major chronic disease of the 21st century and will have a major impact on the quality of life of older Australians, both people with dementia and those who support and care for them. Already there are 269,000 Australians who have dementia. The rapid ageing of the Australian population means the number of people with dementia is expected to increase to nearly one million by 2050.
- 50 Over half of all residents in aged care facilities have a diagnosis of dementia and projections indicate a significant increase in the incidence of dementia over coming years. Labor will strive to make Australia a dementia-friendly society, promote dementia risk reduction and achieve timely diagnosis of dementia.
- 51 Labor believes that people with dementia should have access to quality and appropriate care. Labor will achieve this by providing support to people living with dementia and their carers, including information, counselling, service referral and access to flexible, people-centred services.
- 52 Labor is committed to tackling the challenges posed by the prevalence of dementia, including issues of social attitudes to dementia and targeting research to better understand the causes of dementia and the means of stopping its progression.

Palliative care

- 53 Palliative care is an important part of the aged care and health care systems and every person should have access to quality palliative care. Labor is committed to providing appropriate care that best meets the needs and preferences of older Australians, at home, in hospital or in an aged care facility.
- 54 We will strive for high-quality advance care planning to ensure that older Australians, their families and carers are fully informed about end of life issues and the associated choices that are available. We recognise that Australians want to have better control and choice over the circumstances of their death.

- 55 Labor is committed to promoting community awareness about palliative care and advance care planning to encourage families to discuss the wishes and preferences for the final stages of a person's life.
- 56 To ensure the best possible palliative and end of life care, it is important to build the skills and knowledge of the aged care and primary care workforce along with access to, and the support of, palliative care services. Medical professionals and the health workforce have an obligation to respect the end of life decisions and advanced care directives of older Australians. Older Australians should have their right to have a say over the circumstances of their death respected by all medical professionals.
- 57 We know that people with incurable terminal illness and their carers and families can endure great hardship and disadvantage as they progress through the end of life period, and that they need more and better coordinated palliative and supportive services, clinical and non-clinical, from specialist and non-specialist providers.
- 58 Labor also recognises the specific end of life care needs of particular population groups such as Indigenous Australians, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people living in rural and remote areas.
- 59 Labor believes that investing in community palliative and end of life care and supporting the families and carers of Australians who are in the end stage of their lives is essential to achieving better end of life outcomes. Important considerations include respite, community care and provision of sub-acute beds and services.
- 60 Labor will support infrastructure development in meeting Australia's current and future palliative and end of life care needs.
- 61 Labor is committed to improving the quality of end of life care in hospitals by supporting holistic, multi-faceted best practice models for palliation.

Chapter 7: A world-class education for all Australians

Introduction

- 1 Labor believes every child should get a great education. Education is central to personal fulfilment and the future prosperity of our nation. It underpins our culture and our productive capacity. Labor's goal is to make Australia one of the most highly educated and skilled nations on earth.
- 2 Labor has always been the party of educational opportunity. We see education as the great enabler that helps individuals achieve their full potential, gives our industries the knowledge and skills they need to innovate and become more productive, and promotes social mobility and social harmony. Successive Labor governments have established and invested in education at all levels: early childhood, the primary and secondary years, Vocational Education and Training (VET) and higher education. Labor is continuing this tradition and lifting the quality and equity of education at every level.
- 3 The social and economic transition that Australia is undergoing elevates the importance of education. Too many students, particularly from disadvantaged communities, are not reaching their educational potential. Too many children still have their future determined by their postcode. Our economy is also creating new demands for our future workforce. We need workers equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of a clean energy future. Our education system must prepare a new generation of Australians for the jobs and the world of tomorrow.
- 4 Labor's national reform agenda is unprecedented. We are putting in place the reforms, architecture and investment to deliver world-class education for all Australians. We are focused on every stage of the educational lifecycle to ensure high-quality provision from the early years right through to training at work and adult education in the community.

Labor values

- 5 Labor believes that all Australians, regardless of their social background, have the right to a high quality education to enable them to reach their full potential.
- 6 Labor recognises that good education in the early years is crucial for the development of critical foundational learning skills necessary for later educational success. Early childhood education should therefore be universally available, affordable and of the highest quality.
- 7 Labor believes that every Australian in every community should be able to access free, secular, high quality government schooling and government policies should recognise this. Adequate public funding significantly contributes to the quality of public education and training.
- 8 Labor believes greater equity in educational outcomes is important for strengthening social inclusion and promoting opportunity. Disadvantage and background should not be a barrier to educational achievement for any child. Achieving this requires high expectations of all schools and a socially representative public school of the highest quality in every community that offers every child an excellent education.

- 9 Labor is committed to greater transparency and accountability in our schools and education institutions.
- 10 Labor believes that the right to education demands an environment free from bullying and harassment, including racist, sexist or homophobic bullying and harassment.
- 11 Our publicly-funded schools are among our most important community institutions. Labor believes they should be places where young Australians learn about their civic rights and are immersed in practising values and ethical literacy of active citizenship for the maintenance and renewal of our democracy.
- 12 Labor is committed to the right of families to choose non-government schooling and that this decision should be supported by public funding that reflects need and is consistent with the creation of a diverse and inclusive society.
- 13 Labor believes that government has a clear responsibility to ensure that all students have access to high quality teaching and learning opportunities. Labor will give priority to this imperative in collaboration with state and territory governments, education authorities and the teaching profession, to ensure that support for teachers to develop and improve is enhanced and teachers can achieve the highest standards of professional practice.
- 14 Labor is strongly committed to providing real choice to school leavers in regional areas on where they advance their education. Labor believes that every student in Australia should have access to world class education, which can provide benefits to individual students and to their local communities.
- 15 Labor believes VET is crucial for the creation of a socially mobile, high-wage, high-skill workforce and reform and delivery of high-quality VET is a national priority.
- 16 Labor believes Australia's universities and other higher education institutions play a vitally important role in providing opportunities, teaching knowledge and skills and conducting research for the benefit of society, industry and the environment, and must be funded for the task. Academic freedom must be guaranteed and protected at all times against all forms of commercial and political pressure.
- 17 Labor believes opportunities should be available through our educational institutions including VET and universities, for career enhancing learning and life-long learning in older age.
- 18 Labor believes education and training is fundamental to reducing Indigenous disadvantage and providing opportunities for Indigenous people. Labor is committed to working in partnership with Indigenous communities and families to develop and implement education and training access, attendance and outcomes in order to close this gap.

Labor achievements

Early childhood, school education and youth

We have:

- invested over \$65 billion in schools over four years — almost double the former government in the last term. We have delivered the most significant education reform agenda in living memory
- delivered the Building the Education Revolution program — \$16.2 billion to modernise schools across Australia, support local jobs and stimulate investment
- invested in the modernisation of all schools in regional, remote and rural Australia, through the Building the Education Revolution program and investment in trades training facilities
- introduced and secured agreement for Australia's first ever National Curriculum and delivered curriculum content for English, Maths, History and Science
- given parents and school communities more information about schools than ever before through the My School website
- implemented the first ever national testing through NAPLAN, allowing us to track the literacy and numeracy skills of every student, so we can better target resources
- invested \$2.5 billion in National Partnerships with the states and territories, helping to improve literacy and numeracy, boost teacher quality, and provide extra support to schools with low socioeconomic status
- provided more than \$970 million so all Australian children can have access to early childhood education for 15 hours a week — meaning 51,000 more children will be enrolled in preschool in 2013
- invested \$2.4 billion on the Digital Education Revolution, which is on track to deliver over 780,000 computers to schools by the end of 2011
- invested \$2.5 billion in Trade Training Centres in schools, with every high school student to have access to a centre, laying the foundations needed to address Australia's skills shortage and boost productivity
- commissioned the first review of school funding in more than 30 years, with the independent review panel delivering its findings to government at the end of 2011
- invested almost \$169 million in training and retaining a quality early childhood education workforce
- agreed a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan which will boost attendance levels and literacy and numeracy skills
- endorsed the first National Professional Standards for both school principals and teachers
- committed an extra \$200 million under the More Support for Students with Disabilities scheme
- completed almost half of the 38 additional Early Learning and Care Centres that we have promised to deliver across the country
- supported working families by lifting the Child Care Rebate to 50 per cent of out-of-pocket costs up to a cap of \$7,500 per child per year and made it available to all parents with children in childcare on a fortnightly basis
- contributed \$273.3 million to support the introduction of the new National Quality Framework, which will improve staff to child ratios so children receive more individual care and attention, and improve staff qualifications so educators are better able to help children learn and develop
- committed through the Closing the Gap strategy to ensure access to early childhood education for all Indigenous four years olds in remote communities within five years, to halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements for children within a decade, and to halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 (or equivalent) attainment rates by 2020.

Vocational education, training and universities

We have:

- made a \$3 billion investment to educate and train the skilled workers we need through our Building Australia's Future Workforce package
- set ambitious targets to halve the proportion of Australians aged 20–64 years without qualifications at the Certificate III Level and higher; and double the number of diploma and advanced diploma qualifications by 2020. The number of students in publicly funded vocational education and training undertaking studies at Diploma level or above has already increased by almost 21 per cent between 2007 and 2009
- developed the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development and introduced a reform-focussed National Partnership with funding of \$1.75 billion over five years from 2012–13
- committed \$550 million in a new National Workforce Development Fund. This fund will make it possible for government and industry to work together to deliver an estimated 130,000 high-quality training places
- legislated a demand driven university funding system for undergraduate places from 1 January 2012, in which Commonwealth funding will follow the student, responding to demand and to the strengths of different universities and providing for future workforce need
- committed, following the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education, to a target that by 2025, 40 per cent of all 25 to 34 year-olds should hold a qualification at bachelor's degree or above and that by 2020, 20 percent of undergraduate enrolments should be students from low socioeconomic backgrounds
- give more Australian students than ever before the opportunity of a university education. In excess of 500,000 undergraduate places are being funded at public universities — an increase of 100,000 places since we came to government in 2007
- increased funding for additional student places at public universities under the new demand-driven system
- ensured that growth in participation is also underpinned by the new indexation arrangements which will deliver \$3.15 billion over the five years to 2015, putting universities on a more sustainable basis
- established the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), a key element of the government's quality agenda for higher education. TEQSA will be an independent body with powers to regulate university and non-university higher education providers, monitor quality and set standards
- introduced new performance funding arrangements to reward universities for improving participation in higher education and funding to support structural adjustment to allow universities to improve pathways from VET qualifications and to expand course offerings to better respond to what students and employers need to support the move to the new student demand driven system, the new My University website will improve transparency
- published the Excellence in Research Australia scores which has empowered universities to improve their research performance
- committed \$708 million over the next four years to improve the number of people from disadvantaged backgrounds accessing higher education through a range of school and university-based initiatives, to maximise their opportunity for personal advancement and to contribute to the economy
- following the findings of the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education, introduced comprehensive reforms to ensure that more students across Australia have fairer access to student income support. allocated \$500 million over five years for a Regional Priorities Round of the Education Investment Fund, and regional loading totalling \$249 million, which will strengthen regional higher education by helping to overcome the higher costs of regional campuses, compared to campuses in major cities.

Labor priorities

Early childhood education and care

- 19 Labor's Education Revolution regards early childhood education and care for our young children as national priorities. This includes the expansion of high quality, integrated, accessible and affordable early learning and care programs, including early intervention programs for students with extra educational needs.
- 20 Labor believes that not only are each of the stages of education important in and of themselves, the transitions between them are also vital times that can be stressful for both students and their parents. Ensuring that every student has a clear pathway between the different levels assists their education and promotes lifelong learning.
- 21 Labor recognises that experiences in early childhood heavily influence the opportunities and life chances of young Australians. Learning and development therefore must be at the centre of our system of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). Creating this 21st century early childhood education and care system is the responsibility of all levels of government. Our goal is to provide universal preschool education for all children by 2013.
- 22 Labor will work to create nationally consistent early education standards in cooperation with early childhood educators, ECEC providers and unions, looking specifically at the role of play-based learning, pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills, and the integration of care and learning in all early childhood settings.
- 23 Labor is committed to:
 - providing high-quality early education and care options that are flexible, accessible, affordable and convenient for parents
 - ensuring government funding is tied to workforce and quality care outcomes
 - supporting employment and education participation through the provision of early education and care and out of school hour care options that are flexible, accessible and affordable.
- 24 Labor believes that cost must not be a barrier to early childhood education and care, and will work with all state and territory governments to make early childhood education and care services more affordable for families. Through record investment in fee assistance Labor is committed to ensuring that early childhood education and care remains affordable for Australian families, particularly during this period of reform for the early childhood education and care sector.
- 25 Labor will better target assistance to overcome income and location disadvantage in accessing of early childhood education and care.
- 26 Labor recognises the historical barriers to genuine enterprise bargaining in the early child sector that have resulted in low wages for skilled childcare professionals. These barriers include the highly feminised workforce, multiple small sites of employment, limited community recognition of the work and the high responsibility placed on the workforce, making industrial action difficult.
- 27 Labor believes that quality care for children can only be provided by a highly-skilled, professional and well-paid workforce. To this end, Labor is:
 - cutting tuition fees for students taking Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses in Children's Services at TAFE colleges around Australia
 - creating additional university places in Early Childhood Education courses
 - providing additional financial support to early childhood educators working in hard-to-staff areas, with assistance to reduce HECS-HELP debts incurred through their studies.

- 28 To ensure a quality education and care sector into the future, Labor supports:
- improving wages and conditions for existing workers and to assist in the recruitment of new qualified workers. Labor recognises that the federal government has a role in funding these improvements as the benefits of quality early childhood care flow to the whole community and parents cannot afford increases costs
 - addressing Occupational Health and Safety concerns, including immunisation and first aid courses for children's services workers and additional cleaning staff
 - better matching supply and demand of early childhood education and care places.

- 29 Labor will also:
- coordinate a national program of recognition of prior learning for experienced early childhood education and care professionals to attain formal qualifications
 - Cut tuition fees for experienced, diploma-qualified early childhood educators to undertake early childhood degrees at universities. This will ensure the number of university qualified early childhood teachers required under the National Quality Framework are available
 - support dedicated programming time in centres
 - work to reduce staff-to-child ratios in early childhood education and care centres, to improve quality of care by enabling early childhood education and care professionals to develop secure attachments with children
 - work with state and territory governments to phase in a Certificate III in Children's Services as a mandatory minimum qualification for early childhood education and care professionals.

High standards for all in every school

- 30 Equity in education demands that standards must be raised in every school. Labor will work to raise standards in Australian schools by improving teacher quality, creating a national curriculum, improving school-to-work transitions and investing in new digital technologies, school buildings and other modern facilities.

- 31 Labor will:
- oversee the rollout of the first phase of the \$69.1 million Empowering Local Schools initiative to 1000 schools in 2012–13 — giving school communities more say over decision-making
 - invest \$37.5 million in the National Trade Cadetships scheme to provide school students with a valuable, rigorous vocational training pathway
 - commence the \$18.1 million Teach Next Program to see the first specialists start their intensive teaching course
 - reward our best teachers under the Rewards for Great Teachers scheme
 - ensure the chaplaincy and student welfare program:
 - enables schools to engage secular welfare workers
 - requires minimum educational qualifications to be met by those engaged as chaplains and welfare workers
 - is available to a further 1000 schools
 - develop and deliver a new funding model for Australian schools
 - ameliorate barriers to participation in schooling, including through the provision of childcare assistance and other support mechanisms for school-aged parents.

- 32 Australia must increase the proportion of young people completing 12 years of school. To encourage higher levels of national achievement, Labor has set a number of important targets to be met through the COAG process. By 2020 Labor will:
- raise Year 12 equivalent retention rates to 90 per cent
 - halve the proportion of adult Australians without Year 12 or an equivalent qualification
 - at least halve the gap in Year 12 attainment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- 33 Labor understands and values the benefits that flow from parental involvement in education, including parent participation in school decision-making and governance, especially in disadvantaged communities. Labor will work towards a more systematic approach to supporting parent engagement in our schools.
- 34 Labor believes that every Australian school student should have access to the teaching and learning resources needed to achieve the full range of learning outcomes contained in the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians. Access to these resources should not depend on the financial capacities of individual school communities. It must be universal.
- 35 Labor recognises that a strong education system committed to the highest possible academic standards for every child is essential for the creation of a fair and prosperous society. Labor recognises the excellent work currently performed by the nation's teachers, lecturers and all members of the school and education community, in often challenging circumstances.
- 36 Labor recognises the important work and contribution of education support workers and non-teaching support staff to the school community. It is vital that these workers continue to be directly employed by the states and territories to ensure a cohesive and integrated education community.
- 37 Labor supports a mandatory Indigenous Studies component as part of all teachers' pre-service training and will work with teacher educators and the teaching profession to ensure all teachers have a good understanding of Indigenous education issues and the knowledge to work effectively with Indigenous communities and families.
- 38 Labor understands the important role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education workers and teachers play in achieving successful education outcomes for students. Labor will work with state and territory governments to develop effective recruitment and professional development strategies to increase the number of Indigenous educators within the system.
- 39 Labor believes that schooling must be shaped by Australian society and culture, and keep pace with the times, to strive for educational and intellectual excellence, contribute to the development of shared values that sustain democratic life and foster innovation, awareness, creativity and optimism towards a shared future.
- 40 Labor will work cooperatively with the states and territories to raise and better target school funding, to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes and teacher quality and provide the necessary support for low socioeconomic schools and students most in need.
- 41 Greater equity in educational outcomes is important for strengthening social inclusion and promoting opportunity. Labor believes every local community should have access to quality government schooling that offers every child an excellent education. Labor will continue to give priority to equity in schooling so every student can achieve their full potential. We will focus the right support on those who are not currently participating or achieving what they can, including those whose participation is harmed by bullying and harassment. We will do this through a comprehensive approach to the planning, funding and reform of schools, where targeted initiatives complement the base of adequate and appropriate resources needed in all schools.

- 42 Poverty remains the greatest indicator of disadvantage and the single most important barrier to educational success. Labor recognises that schools that serve communities with many low income families need specialised support for teachers, student counselling and community engagement, and additional resources to provide that support. Labor will provide targeted resources to schools with concentrations of students from disadvantaged backgrounds to improve their educational participation and achievement.
- 43 To lift standards and quality, Labor will improve transparency and accountability at all levels. In return for higher levels of investment, Labor will expect increased effort from educational authorities, schools and students.
- 44 Labor will adopt new funding arrangements for all schools that reflect the following principles:
- federal, state and territory funding policies will be aligned to provide a coherent national approach to the resourcing of schools
 - a new era of transparency and stronger use of evidence will inform the allocation of resources and lift educational outcomes across all schools and sectors
 - public funding should be subject to all schools in all sectors meeting exacting quality standards for curriculum and teaching, ensuring maximum value in the use of public resources and consistent accountability and reporting requirements
 - parents, teachers and members of the community should have access to nationally comparable information that details a school's results and the workforce, financial resources and student population it serves. Transparent reporting of student and school achievement must be designed to aid improvement rather than contribute to division within and among schools. It must also occur in a way that does not identify individual students
 - the same transparency and accountability requirements will apply to both government and non-government schools
 - governments have a prime obligation to adequately and properly fund government schools in order to provide high quality public schooling that is accessible to all children and young people.
- 45 Labor believes that Australia should have a consistent, world-class national core curriculum suited to the needs of all students in the contemporary world, as well as allowing time and space in the school curriculum for local content to meet needs of individual communities. Labor will develop this through the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, which brings together for the first time the functions of curriculum development, assessment and reporting at a national level. This includes the collaborative development of the National Curriculum, initially in the core areas of English, Maths, Science and History. Labor acknowledges that the content of what is learnt in Australia's education systems should be inclusive of Indigenous cultures and perspectives and will ensure this is part of the National Curriculum. Labor will ensure that environmental education is a core study for all high school students and forms part of the national curriculum.
- 46 Labor is committed to providing better access to trades training in our secondary schools. Labor believes a trades education is a great way for young Australians to pursue an important career path and to contribute to national prosperity. Labor's Trades Training Centre program will ensure that over the next decade more Australian students can access VET in new or upgraded trade and vocational education and training facilities.
- 47 Labor recognises the potential for ICT to accelerate learning and improve educational outcomes. Labor will continue to invest in new digital technology for all Australian school children to ensure Australian schools are using ICT to improve learning and universal access.

- 48 To this end, Labor's Digital Education Revolution will continue to:
- provide new information and communication technology for all secondary school students in years 9–12
 - improve broadband connectivity to schools via the NBN
 - develop more training options for teachers to update their ICT skills
 - create new online curriculum tools and resources to support Australia's new National Curriculum.
- 49 Labor recognises that Building the Education Revolution means building the school facilities of the future. Labor believes that the physical condition of our schools must reflect the importance of education to society. Rundown school facilities cannot project the necessary level of dignity involved in the pursuit of knowledge and skills.
- 50 Labor has invested in Australia's biggest ever school building modernisation program by providing funding for new school infrastructure projects in every school to upgrade and build new facilities, such as libraries, multipurpose halls and science and language classrooms. This will bring our schools into the 21st century, and prepare them to deal with the challenges of the future.
- 51 Labor is fully committed to the principle of excellent, universal public education and will not pursue the privatisation of any aspect of public schooling.

Children with disability

- 52 Labor wants to ensure all children have the skills and opportunities to participate in society. This means investing in measures that improve educational outcomes and promote inclusion for all children, particularly those with disability.
- 53 Labor is providing new funds to help families fund early intervention services for eligible children with disability. Additional funds will be available to children living in rural and remote areas to help meet the additional costs of accessing services. There will also be further funds for the Helping Children with Autism program to meet increased demand for early intervention services. Labor is working to build a National Disability Insurance Scheme that will provide early intervention services for children with disability.
- 54 Labor has also committed further funding to assist schools and teachers to meet the needs of students with disability by offering coordinated support and connecting students with services. This investment will help identify the strategies that most improve the learning experiences of these students.
- 55 Labor is reviewing the funding arrangements for schooling, including investigating how best to meet the needs of different students, including those with disability. The Disability Standards for Education are also under review and work is underway to develop a nationally consistent definition of students with disability.

Providing a strong transition from school to work or training

- 56 Labor believes that the transition from school to work is a crucial time in every person's life. Students who do not make a successful transition from school to work face the prospect of diminished opportunities and the heightened risk of long episodes of unemployment throughout their adult life.
- 57 Labor is committed to education policy reforms to improve the school-to-work transition for young Australians. Labor recognises that governments must do all they can to encourage young people to stay at school, develop a range of learning pathways within and alongside schools, and support students in the world beyond school if they choose to leave.

58 Labor will:

- aim to lift the proportion of young Australians achieving Year 12 or its equivalent (including TAFE, adult and community education, apprenticeships and traineeships) to 90 per cent
- provide financial and other support, incentives, jobs programs and related training, for those young people outside the formal education and training system
- promote collaboration between business, trade unions and educational providers to enhance the participation of young people in post-school learning or work pathways
- provide better access to career pathways and qualifications so that all young people can remain connected to further learning or work after leaving school
- seek to eliminate inappropriate duplication between federal, state, territory and local government roles and services in the education system
- promote opportunities for career progression and job enrichment to further social inclusion.

The vocational education and training system of the future

59 A strong education and training sector is vital to ensuring Australia can create the high-skill, high-wage jobs of the future and transition into the low clean energy economy of the future.

60 Labor is proud of the strong role played by the labour movement in building the VET sector, from its beginnings in the working men's colleges and mechanics institutes of the 19th century, to the great expansion of the 1980s and 1990s. The results can be seen today in the unmatched prosperity and independence enjoyed by millions of Australians with trade and para-professional qualifications.

61 Labor believes Australia's VET sector and universities, while remaining separate institutions, must provide educational pathways for all Australians, to reflect the demand for knowledge and skills in every industry and the expansion of new knowledge-intensive service industries, including such industries as early learning and aged care, which have narrowed the traditional divide between knowledge-based and vocationally-based education.

62 Labor believes Australia's VET system will require sustained levels of investment and modernisation to play its full role in this future to help individual Australians develop the skills they need to obtain secure, sustainable and satisfying employment.

63 Labor recognises that the current economic context requires an even stronger emphasis on skills for future workforce development. Labor will:

- ensure that all young people are equipped with the qualifications necessary for a successful transition to a secure working future. The proportion of young people without the Year 12 or equivalent and the proportion who are not engaged in full time work or full time education and training will be reduced
- ensure that the proportion of the existing workforce without post-school qualifications is reduced and the level of the qualifications is increased. Labor regards this as an essential step in increasing participation rates in the labour market, improving the productive performance of our industries, increasing innovation, reducing unemployment and underemployment, and enabling workers and firms to better adapt to workplace change
- lift the level of literacy and numeracy in the population as a whole, including among existing workers to remove this critical barrier to participation in further education and training and more productive work
- ensure that workers in carbon intensive industries can access the training and qualifications they need to support low carbon pollution practices in existing carbon intensive industries and in new low pollution activities.

64

Labor will build a VET system based upon the following principles:

- a national system, with high quality nationally-accredited qualifications that connects to further pathways in work, learning and the community
- quality in all aspects of delivery and assessment
- transparent governance, funding and performance
- competency-based qualifications that are developed by Industry Skills Councils in cooperation with industry stakeholders and the new National Workforce Development and Productivity Agency
- accessibility that allows new workers, existing workers, youth and industry participants to easily have their needs met
- diversity, with the core role of TAFE supported by a range of private providers
- the system's capacity to contribute to innovation and productivity
- quality through professional teaching qualifications and standards for VET teachers.

65

To strengthen these foundations, Labor will:

- ensure the Australian economy has the qualified skills base it needs to grow, innovate and prosper by expanding opportunities for VET, through apprenticeships or institutional-based learning
- equip Australians with relevant, valued and long-term qualifications and maintain the integrity of Australian trade qualifications by ensuring that there is an effective and thorough system in place to recognise skills obtained both domestically and overseas
- maximise training opportunities for existing workers to continually update and raise their post-school qualifications and skill levels, to prevent workers being forced into low-skilled and precarious employment
- meet the needs of people from educationally and vocationally disadvantaged backgrounds so they can gain qualifications and employable skills, including those who would benefit from 'second chance' opportunities for education and training
- support TAFE in its dual roles of training provider and as a key access point for community education and ensure it is not undermined by competition based on low cost and quality
- require the training system to be more responsive to the needs of individuals and their employers particularly through flexible delivery methods, better integration of work and learning and more effective recognition of prior learning
- encourage the inclusion in qualifications of transferable skills and knowledge that will equip workers for innovation and enable them to adapt to new technology and workplace change
- ensure that training is particularly targeted at high quality and higher level training and lifting the participation of those who have been hardest to engage in further education and training
- increase the linkage between public training investment and the actual take up and use of skills and qualifications in more innovative and productive workplaces and in more secure employment. This will involve the greater engagement of employers, the workforce and their unions in identifying skills needed in the workplace and industry, linking on the job learning to national qualifications and encouraging greater employer investment and opportunities for a more productive workplace
- recognise that workplace representatives have a key role in promoting training opportunities to existing workers and facilitating greater demand for training
- ensure that workers who are in business and industries that are facing restructuring have access, at the earliest possible time, to broad-based training to achieve national qualifications that can improve their chances of secure employment and career paths

- extend learning opportunities through affordable, flexible adult and community education and ensure the continued modernisation of infrastructure and better access to these learning opportunities
- ensure that training strategies are linked to industry development policy
- introduce governance arrangements to support an effective, cooperative national training system with a leading role for government, employers and unions
- ensure that all providers of VET are subject to an efficient, comprehensive and national system of quality assurance, including independent and regular auditing
- require all providers of VET to have effective internal mechanisms to deal with student concerns and complaints
- ensure that green skills and sustainable practices are included in training packages and relevant VET qualifications.

Boosting apprenticeships and traineeships

- 66 Labor recognises that the apprenticeship system is the backbone of our skilled trades and technical workforce, providing a valuable and rewarding career for millions of Australians.
- 67 The apprenticeship system of the 21st century will need to adapt to the changing structure of the workforce by improving the form, structure and duration of apprenticeships and traineeships. We are committed to consulting further to identify additional opportunities to align the Australian apprenticeships system with the needs of the economy.
- 68 An effective apprenticeship system involves a partnership between government, business, trade unions, TAFE and other training providers. Australian businesses need to provide more apprenticeship opportunities. Australian governments at all levels, have an obligation to provide apprentice training opportunities where possible.
- 69 Labor will:
- establish and implement minimum national standards and individual training plans for the protection of apprentices and trainees
 - focus on quality apprenticeship and traineeship programs and on higher skill levels, ensuring that public funding is directly linked to the level of training effort, the completion of quality outcomes and the development of future skill needs
 - make sure all apprenticeship and traineeship programs deliver full qualifications consistent with the national qualifications framework
 - ensure that trades qualifications continue to promote a combination of work and on-the-job training, so that the career paths for workers are enhanced
 - ensure there is sufficient funding available for on and off-the-job training for apprentices, especially in regional and rural Australia
 - support the role of group training companies particularly in facilitating employment and training for apprentices engaged by employers in the resources sector on major projects
 - simplify, improve and enhance the effectiveness of incentives for employers to increase the number of apprentices they engage and provide increased mentoring and other support for employers committed to training our future workforce
 - develop and enhance incentives for employers to increase the number of apprentices they engage and provide increased mentoring and other support for employers committed to training our future workforce.

Indigenous education

- 70 Labor believes that a high quality education is critical to Closing the Gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and is committed to ensuring that Indigenous children and young people have access to the same opportunities as non-Indigenous Australians.
- 71 Labor celebrates the fact that more Indigenous children are attending school than ever before, recognising however that current levels of Indigenous school participation and attainment are still unacceptable. All people have the power to change their children's lives by ensuring that their children attend school. Evidence shows that higher school attendance rates will provide better employment, health and life outcomes and opportunities for all children. Labor will support Indigenous families and communities to get their children to school each day and ensure they are engaged in learning.
- 72 Labor has:
- established clear targets to Close the Gap in educational attainment, participation and literacy and numeracy
 - invested in early childhood education to ensure that Indigenous children receive quality early childhood education and care.
- 73 The Indigenous Youth Career Pathways program will also provide for schools-based traineeships and other support to assist Indigenous students to complete high school and move into work or further education.
- 74 Labor recognises that improving education and employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians is critical to Closing the Gap on Indigenous disadvantage, and believes that the future of every Indigenous child should include a good education and a good job. Labor is committed to ensuring that Indigenous Australians have access to the same education opportunities as other Australians and has established clear targets for closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage in education. Labor has committed to:
- ensure access to early childhood education for all Indigenous four years olds in remote communities within five years
 - halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements for children within a decade
 - halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 (or equivalent) attainment rates by 2020.

Adult and community education

- 75 Adult and community education is an integral component of lifelong learning in Australia. Labor is committed to extending learning opportunities through adult and community education that is affordable, flexible and community-based, and can adapt to the diverse learning needs of all adults.
- 76 Labor acknowledges the significant contribution to the education of new arrivals to Australia by adult migration education services.

Greater equity, higher quality teaching and world-class research at our nation's universities

- 77 Labor believes that all Australians, regardless of their background or where they live, should have the opportunity to access higher education. Today's university students will become the graduates that Australia's industries and businesses need to compete in the global contest for skilled employees. Australia needs a strong, affordable and accessible higher education system to ensure that we are equipping Australians for the jobs of the future. Labor is committed to supporting a strong role for public libraries as spaces for community enrichment and learning.

- 78 Labor understands that investment in higher education will drive improvements in productivity and improve Australia's future economic competitiveness. We are committed to the expansion of a high quality university sector, to educate the graduates needed by an economy based on knowledge, skills and innovation. This approach is essential to enable Australia to participate fully in, and benefit from, the global knowledge economy. Labor acknowledges the importance of community based self-help groups and activities such as Men's Sheds, University of the Third Age, regional conservatoriums and community bands as forums for lifelong learning and engagement.
- 79 Labor will ensure Australian universities are open to all Australians, based on principles of merit and equity. Labor recognises the important role of higher education in shaping a fairer, more socially-inclusive society and is committed to promoting greater participation in tertiary education by Australians from lower income backgrounds and from regional, remote and Indigenous backgrounds.
- 80 Labor supports the role that higher education plays in improving the quality of our lives by fostering higher learning. Labor believes that the pursuit of knowledge is an important end in itself, and will continue to support the autonomy of public universities and the principle of academic independence that underpins higher learning.
- 81 Labor recognises that excellence in higher education is vital to enable Australia to achieve other key objectives, including environmental sustainability, greater understanding of other cultures, improved engagement with our region and building a stronger framework of our democracy.
- 82 Labor will:
- steadily increase levels of national investment in higher education as part of a funding framework that at least maintains the value of public funding for teaching and research in public universities
 - work towards a national target of 40 per cent of 25–34 year olds holding bachelors degree or higher by 2025, by ensuring that future funding for Australia's public universities is responsive to student demand
 - work towards the achievement of a national target of 20 per cent of university undergraduate enrolments made up of low socio-economic background students by 2020, through support and resourcing for innovative programs to assist universities to attract, support and retain students from under-represented groups
 - support a joined-up tertiary sector to make it easier for students with VET qualifications to articulate into higher education degree programs to build their skills
 - work towards the closing of the gaps in Indigenous participation and retention in higher education for Indigenous students and Indigenous academic staff
 - provide access to university for students with disabilities through innovative programs that support universities to promote and disability access
 - recognise and support the important role that regional universities and campuses play in making higher educational opportunities available to regional students and in the development and support of regional communities
 - support strong, effective oversight of the international education sector, with the protection of international students at its core, through a risk-based regulatory framework, independent scrutiny and quality assurance
 - support universities in planning for their future academic workforce needs in a growing higher education system
 - focus on the quality of educational outcomes in higher education, rather than interfering in the internal management of universities
 - Labor strongly opposes the introduction and use of full fee degrees for undergraduate courses in Australian universities.

- 83 Labor recognises that financial costs and pressures act as a barrier to participation in tertiary education. Labor strongly supports HECS-HELP and related student loan programs that ensure greater participation in tertiary education by allowing students to defer the cost of their studies until they are earning a decent income. Labor recognises that Australian students make a significant contribution to the cost of their education and will ensure that HECS contributions do not create financial disincentives to study. Labor also supports a strong, sustainable and targeted system of student income support that provides greater assistance to Australian students who need it most. Under Labor governments, students who do not have the means to support themselves during their university study will be provided with adequate support.
- 84 Labor strongly supports student involvement in the management of their university communities and in university decision-making processes. Labor believes that it is important that funding is restored for student-run services and independent advocacy. Labor will support students in the creation of democratic, student-run representative bodies and safeguard the right for students to voluntarily organise themselves on campus. Labor believes that good student amenities and services like childcare, health services, counselling, advocacy, and sporting facilities are vital to the quality of students' experience on campus and should be securely and adequately funded.
- 85 Labor supports the potential of flexible delivery and online learning, using technologies and community spaces to create and support access to learning, particularly in regional communities.

Chapter 8: Preparing for Australia's future health needs

Introduction

- 1 Australia's future depends on our ability to tackle the long-term health challenges. Just as past Labor governments took the far-sighted step of building Medicare, Labor is undertaking significant reforms that are needed to place health care on a sustainable basis, long into the future. This will require extensive changes to meet a range of new health care demands arising from increased rates of chronic disease and the demands of an ageing population.
- 2 It will also require a far greater focus on prevention and wellbeing. Keeping people well and out of hospital will deliver benefits not only to individuals but to the entire health system, taking pressure off our strained hospitals and allowing governments to use existing resources more effectively.
- 3 Health is important to all Australians, at both a personal and a national level. Personally, health affects everything we do—how we work, the time we spend with our children and loved ones, what we can do in our free time. Nationally, health has a significant economic impact. Good health boosts productivity and improves workplace participation. A healthier country delivers a stronger economy. Our health reforms are helping Australians live longer and healthier lives.

Labor values

- 4 Labor believes that Australia's public health system should enable all Australians to reach their full potential by providing certainty of care if or when it is needed. Universal health care is a public good, fosters broader goals of equity and fairness across our community.
- 5 Labor believes that a good public health system is the foundation of security, opportunity and equality for any society, allowing families and individuals to cope with unanticipated health issues.
- 6 Central to the continuing strength of our health system is a commitment to universal care. Labor is committed to the future of Medicare. Labor built Medicare and only Labor has supported Medicare. It is central to our vision of a fairer Australia.
- 7 Labor believes that public hospital policy and funding should be implemented as the result of a cooperative reform process between the federal, state and territory governments.
- 8 Labor is committed to families being able to access high-quality and affordable health care, including any necessary medicines, wherever they live.
- 9 Labor believes a strong and sustainable health system depends on both public and private health sectors, which complement each other and provide individuals with choices and guarantees of social inclusion.
- 10 Labor values the role of doctors, nurses and allied health professionals who work tirelessly to care for Australians. It is a priority to ensure that training opportunities are increased to continue to provide high-quality health services in the future.
- 11 Labor believes that tackling the mounting challenges in the health system, including those caused by increased rates of chronic disease and the demands of an ageing population can only be achieved through far more attention to primary care and prevention.

- 12 Labor believes the ageing of the population presents opportunities to be harnessed by both the individual and society more broadly. The average 65 year old today is better educated, wealthier and vastly healthier than their parents were at the same age.
- 13 Because of the vast disparities in health in our community, and because chronic diseases disproportionately affect the most vulnerable, Labor believes a focus on prevention and delivering universal health care, will play important roles in ending inequity.
- 14 Equity in access to health care for our Indigenous Australians is a guiding principle of Labor's approach. Labor is committed to closing the appalling gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.
- 15 Labor's commitment to equitable access to health care includes recognising the specific health needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Australians.
- 16 Labor believes that increased transparency and accountability will improve the performance of health services and give individuals greater choice in the provision of their own health care.

Labor achievements

Public hospitals

We have:

- delivered record investments in health and the biggest health reforms since Labor introduced Medicare. Our historic agreement shows we get things done and will deliver a better deal for patients with more doctors, more nurses and more beds
- after years of neglect, increased hospital funding by 50 per cent (or \$20 billion) in 2008, and delivered a further \$20 billion from 2011 representing an additional \$175 billion of Commonwealth investment in hospitals to 2029–30
- partnered with states and territories to equally share the burden of increasing hospital costs — and providing federal funds direct to Local Hospital Networks through a single national funding pool
- increased the number of elective surgery operations delivered in Australia by more than 70,000 in 2008–09 and 2009–10
- introduced new targets for faster elective surgery and emergency department care, with reward funding for states and territories that deliver results
- begun delivering over 1300 new sub-acute beds and services across Australia, over and above an additional 433 hospital beds opened between 2007–08 and 2009–10
- over 460 projects underway in 370 hospitals to improve emergency department, elective surgery and sub-acute care
- introduced greater local governance of public hospital services with Local Hospital Networks being established around Australia
- created more cancer services — building 24 Regional Cancer Centres to bring services closer to patients
- upgraded the nation's health infrastructure with a \$5 billion Health and Hospitals Fund including \$1.8 billion for critical upgrades to hospitals and health services for regional Australians
- provided more information and greater accountability to the community through public performance reporting on the MyHospitals website
- committed to a sustainable public and private health system. Under Labor over 860,000 extra people have taken out private health insurance.

Primary and preventive health care

We have:

- began building 64 GP Super Clinics and we are expanding 425 existing General Practice clinics
- by 2014, have doubled the number of GPs in training
- commenced training more than 6000 extra doctors over ten years, including 5500 extra GPs and 680 extra specialists
- introduced a GP after hours help line to make it easier for families to get help when they need it
- increased the number of nurses training at universities by over 1000 every year and we will be supporting 4600 nurses in General Practice
- started getting GPs and specialists closer to home by providing incentives to work in rural and regional Australia
- connected regional and outer metropolitan Australians to medical specialists through new videoconferencing TeleHealth services, utilising the power of broadband
- provided nurse practitioners and midwives rights under Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme for the first time
- begun establishing a network of Medicare Locals around Australia to better coordinate and expand primary health care services and addressing local needs
- started investing \$2.2 billion in the largest ever mental health reform package, focusing on early intervention and coordinated care
- delivered more dental check-ups — more than 1.3 million dental check-ups have been provided under the Medicare Teen Dental Plan
- invested \$1.6 billion in a national partnership to close the gap on Indigenous health. 49,000 Indigenous health assessments were provided in 2010–11, an increase of over 64 per cent over 2009–10
- committed to personally controlled eHealth records for all Australians who want them; saving patients from repeating their medical history every time they need assistance
- established the Australian National Preventive Health Agency to lead policy development to help reduce preventable health issues
- led the world in the fight against tobacco — including being the first country in the world to introduce plain packaging of tobacco products
- taken action to address binge drinking by closing the loop hole that allowed cheaper ready to drink “alcopop” drinks and we are implementing national and community programs to address this social problem
- addressed obesity and other preventative health issues through national and community campaigns under our record \$872 million investment
- added over 500 medicines and vaccines to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and National Immunisation Program, worth over \$5 billion
- invested \$151 million to improve organ donation rates and transplants in Australia.

Labor priorities

A hospital system that works

- 17 Labor recognises the central role played by hospitals in health care in Australia, and supports the roles of both public and private hospitals, while believing firmly in the need for a high-quality public hospital system accessible to all Australians.
- 18 Labor is committed to significant reform of the public hospital system, anticipating increasing demand in coming years due to higher rates of chronic disease and an ageing population.
- 19 Labor will implement the cooperative health reform agreement between the federal, state and territory governments that will increase the funding, transparency and efficiency of Australian public hospitals. Different governments must work together, never forgetting that their first duty is to the patient.
- 20 Labor is committed to cooperatively funding the increased costs of health services through the system of Activity Based Funding to drive efficiency in the performance of public hospitals. Labor will improve accountability of federal funding by directing funding through a national funding pool to Local Hospital Networks.
- 21 Labor will continue to direct funding to the states and territories to strengthen our public hospitals, and to improve services in areas including elective surgery, emergency services, and sub-acute care, measures that have been agreed successfully through the Council of Australian Governments' reform processes.
- 22 Labor will use measures such as reward funding to improve the performance of public hospitals in elective surgery, emergency departments so that less Australians have to wait lengthy times for important treatment. Labor will continue to build on important transparency measures, such as MyHospitals, so that the performance of public hospitals is transparently reported to Australians.
- 23 In line with these achievements, Labor will:
 - foster cooperation between all levels of government to improve health services, and to ensure accountability in relation to expenditure of health funding
 - build on existing investments in hospitals to ensure states and territories are equipped to deliver the health infrastructure that is needed
 - expand and reform the health workforce so families can get the health care they need, when and where they need it
 - invest in prevention and primary care, to take pressure off hospitals by keeping people well
 - deliver specific services to improve the health of Indigenous Australians
 - focus on improving continuity and coordination of care, especially for Australians with complex and ongoing care needs
 - deliver eHealth systems that allow patients to ensure their health information is available for both their hospital and primary care health practitioners
 - provide mechanisms for genuine community input, including for the purposes of identifying areas of need, into the provision of local health services
 - Labor is firmly committed to the principle of an excellent universal public hospital system and will not pursue the privatisation of the public hospital system.
- 24 Labor will continue to:
 - expand access to primary health care services that will help people to avoid hospital
 - work on tackling health problems that deliver large numbers of people to hospitals, such as tobacco related disease, binge drinking and avoidable GP-type presentations
 - invest in hospital infrastructure to improve services, capacity and the use of technology
 - train high-quality staff to work in public hospitals.

- 25 Labor will continue to work to increase the number of Australians seen on time for elective surgery, building on the progress already made that delivered over 70,000 extra surgery operations.
- 26 Labor is committed to improving transparency and accountability in our hospitals, both public and private. Labor believes that significant reform can be achieved by increasing local involvement in the management of hospital services through Local Hospital Networks and transparent performance measures. Labor is also committed to using reward payments to encourage state and territory innovation and results.
- 27 Labor will work with the states and territories to implement national health reform to implement much more stringent, nationally consistent public performance reporting across hospitals, and to work towards delivering an activity-based hospital funding model.
- 28 Labor will continue to work to:
- ensure hospital performance data is reported in a nationally consistent manner
 - expand hospital safety and quality reporting to private hospitals
 - ensure that public performance reporting is expanded across all areas of health, beyond hospitals
 - ensure that people have the information they need to make informed choices about their health care.
- 29 Labor believes that government is best placed to deliver a strong and quality public health system which is focused on patient care and positive health outcomes. Everyone should have access to quality public health, irrespective of their capacity to pay.

Medicare

- 30 Labor believes that Medicare is an integral part of Australia's high-quality health system. Since Labor established Medicare in 1984, it has ensured all Australians have access to high-quality, affordable health care.
- 31 Labor believes that Medicare should be retained, defended and strengthened. Labor is opposed to allowing individuals to opt out of Medicare and is opposed to the direct or indirect means testing of Medicare and bulk billing. Medicare should remain the universal, fully funded system for all Australians.
- 32 Labor is committed to strengthening Medicare to meet future challenges by:
- ensuring all Australians have fair access to Medicare and to bulk-billed GP and specialist services
 - making the promotion of wellness and the prevention of disease a focus of Medicare
 - achieving better continuity of care for patients and better integration between Medicare services, acute care and aged care
 - developing a more flexible Medicare to enable access to genuine multidisciplinary care delivered by the health care teams of the future
 - ensuring better access to GP services after hours and for those in residential aged care
 - expanding the number of practice nurses in General Practice
 - cutting red tape that hinders doctors and takes valuable time away from treating patients
 - maintaining Labor's reforms that have granted Medicare access for nurse practitioners and midwives.
- 33 Labor will continue to build and develop Medicare Locals to coordinate and enhance primary health care services in local communities. These organisations will be able to identify and address gaps in the local delivery of services, and address unmet need.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

- 34 Labor is committed to ensuring that all Australians have affordable access to essential medicines through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). Labor has added over 500 medicines, worth more than \$4 billion, and undertaken reform to ensure it is more sustainable for the future. Labor will:
- ensure thorough and timely evaluation of new medicines before their approval for use in Australia
 - ensure that medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme remain affordable
 - ensure that all medicines available in Australia are safe
 - work to reduce the harm caused by the misuse of pharmaceuticals, through inadvertent misuse of prescription drugs or fraudulent abuse of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme
 - support the expansion of eHealth that will help to reduce medication errors
 - support the continuing growth of the Australian pharmaceutical industry and recognise its potential to generate jobs and exports for Australia.

A world-class health system: supporting public and private health

- 35 Labor believes the public and private sectors are both crucial for giving Australia a world-class health system. Under Labor, almost a million extra Australians have taken out private hospital cover. While governments have sole responsibility for managing the public health sector, they must also support, strengthen and ensure sustainable private health care.

- 36 Labor will:
- make all efforts to support both public and private health sectors
 - ensure that public and private health services complement each other
 - ensure that all necessary services are provided in the public health system
 - work to improve both systems by encouraging competition, innovation and new uses of both public and private health providers
 - retain Medibank Private in public ownership
 - apply high standards to the provision of both public and private health services including the reporting of both public and private hospital performance information on the MyHospitals website
 - encourage public and private hospitals to work together, including for the provision of elective surgery
 - regulate the private health industry to ensure that value-for-money products are available to all policy holders
 - work to eliminate surprise gap payments for private health insurance holders
 - work to increase the sustainability of private health insurance for Australians
 - work to ensure the benefits of private health insurance rebates are provided to those Australians who need them most — consistent with Labor principles
 - ensure that patient choice and clinical decision-making remain at the heart of health care
 - ensure that every Australian has access to high-quality health care and dental care, through the public and private sectors.

Tackling chronic disease

- 37 Labor recognises that levels of chronic disease are a strong indicator of socioeconomic status in Australia, disproportionately disadvantaging poorer communities. This makes tackling chronic disease part of Labor's mission.
- 38 In its efforts to tackle chronic disease, Labor will address this disparity by:
- specifically targeting the causes of chronic disease in economically disadvantaged communities through working with local government and Medicare Locals
 - establishing Medicare Locals around Australia that will work with local clinicians to better integrate and expand services to better treat and prevent chronic disease
 - expanding the provision of primary health care services through GP Super Clinics, upgrades to existing GP practices, training of GPs, TeleHealth and improved access to afterhours services.
 - targeting prevention programs at these communities including working with local government
 - taking world leading action to combat smoking
 - working with the Australian National Preventive Health Agency to further develop preventative health policies and solutions
 - working with local communities to develop effective local solutions to combat rising levels of chronic disease
 - ensuring that health services are able to be accessed by all Australians, wherever they live
 - trialling the introduction of innovative models for management of diabetes.

Promoting wellness, preventing disease

- 39 Labor believes that primary care and prevention must play central roles in the Australian health system.
- 40 Labor believes that we cannot allow a situation in which our children may have a lower life expectancy than adults currently enjoy. Labor believes in national leadership to improve the health of Australians and particularly Australian children. This is a vital social priority as well as an urgent economic priority. Australia cannot afford to compound the challenges of an ageing society by having an increasing number of working age adults outside the labour force and in need of medical care because of preventable chronic and complex conditions.
- 41 Labor recognises that health maintenance, promotion and illness prevention will have vital roles to play in combating the rise of preventable chronic diseases, and that the responsibility for this rests primarily with governments. Progress will, however, also require substantial changes in personal behaviour, which can only be achieved and sustained with the active participation of all levels of government, the non-government sector, health professionals, local communities, and individuals.
- 42 To enhance preventative health efforts, Labor will:
- seek to intervene early in the lives of children, to encourage healthy habits for life
 - take clear steps to cut down on binge-drinking, especially youth binge-drinking
 - take strong action to tackle illicit drug use
 - continue world leading policies to reduce smoking levels
 - encourage health professionals to provide advice to people about improving their lifestyles, in order to reduce significant health problems and hospital admissions
 - examine what interventions can be taken across the broader community to encourage healthy lifestyles, including working with the Australian National Preventative Health Agency

- work with all levels of government, local communities, health professionals and individuals to find new ways to encourage Australians to live longer, healthier lives
- undertake health education and social marketing programs, including programs targeted at Indigenous Australians and Australians from non-English speaking backgrounds
- recognise that mental health and wellbeing can only be achieved by activities across a spectrum and develop programs in health promotion, illness prevention and relapse prevention, as well as treatment, recovery and disability services.

Access to frontline care in the community

- 43 Labor is committed to providing families with the health care they need, when and where they need it. Labor will continue to invest in delivering GP Super Clinics, with multidisciplinary care and convenient access to a range of health professionals.
- 44 Labor will address the shortfall in health professionals through its increases in GP training places, as well as funding for health workforce training across various professions.
- 45 To improve the access of families to the frontline care they need, Labor will:
- establish further Medicare Locals around Australia to better coordinate primary health care
 - build more GP Super Clinics and continue to upgrade existing GP infrastructure to allow for more services and training to be delivered
 - expand and better coordinate after hours GP care
 - continue to encourage the use of TeleHealth services
 - promote the development of multidisciplinary care by primary health care teams
 - continue to invest in training extra health professionals, particularly in rural, regional and outer metropolitan areas of need
 - continue to provide incentives for primary health professionals to work in regional areas
 - invest further in primary health care infrastructure, including in rural and regional Australia
 - increase the transparency of performance of the primary health care system through new reporting of performance and outcomes
 - continue to support roles for nurse practitioners and midwives to have access to Medicare and the PBS.

Sexual and reproductive health

- 46 To improve reproductive health for men and women, Labor will:
- provide universal access to fertility advice and control programs and advice on the safe use of contraceptives
 - support the rights of women to determine their own reproductive lives, particularly the right to choose appropriate fertility control and abortion and ensure that these choices are on the basis of sound social and medical advice
 - fund research into the prevention of infertility and fertility control and ensure that access to assisted reproductive technology programs is not determined by economic circumstances or any other form of discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or relationship status
 - enforce a ban on the cloning of human beings.
- 47 Labor recognises the importance of renewing efforts to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS, STIs and blood borne viruses, in partnership with the NGO sector.

Lesbian gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex health

- 48 Labor recognises that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people are a priority population with specific health needs, for whom promoting equitable access requires targeted programs. Labor will:
- continue to develop health strategies to address the needs of LGBTI people, working in partnership with these communities
 - continue to support the LGBTI health peak bodies for their work and consult with these bodies on health issues affecting them
 - continue to provide training for health care workers about issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, and research about LGBTI issues
 - continue to support programs aimed at prevention of suicide for high risk groups, including LGBTI Australians
 - include issues relevant to LGBTI Australians, and the views of LGBTI seniors, in aged care planning and service provision
 - provide for the needs of young LGBTI Australians, particularly in rural areas
 - continue to ensure that Medicare and the PBS supports anti-discriminatory policies for LGBTI Australians and that same sex couples and their families can access Medicare and the PBS as a family.

Child and maternal health

- 49 To build on Labor's investments in child and maternal health, including investment in universal perinatal screening, nurse home visiting programs, Healthy Kids Checks, Healthy Children preventative health projects and programs to improve Indigenous child and maternal health, Labor will:
- improve the promotion and provision of perinatal services, including depression screening, prevention and treatment
 - improve the information available to mothers about the options available for childbirth regardless of income or geographical location
 - continue to support the ability for midwives to access Medicare and PBS services
 - ensure continuity of care is available after a baby is born
 - continue to implement special programs for Indigenous mothers and babies, to reduce mortality rates and improve health
 - support and encourage breastfeeding
 - work to increase the proportion of children born at a healthy birth weight
 - make high-quality dental services available across the community
 - continue to expand preventative health programs such as Healthy Children programs and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Gardens scheme
 - adjust the Healthy Kids check to include social and emotional wellbeing.
- 50 Labor is committed to improving the health outcomes of Australian women, and implementing policies to encourage the health system to be more responsive to the needs of women. Labor will:
- implement the new National Women's Health Policy—the first in almost 20 years
 - take account of the special needs of LGBTI women, including the provision of culturally appropriate health services

- continue to implement policies to address peri natal depression, to improve prevention, early detection and support services for expectant and new mothers
- continue to improve services and choices available to women, building upon access to Medicare and the PBS for midwives, more workforce support, and support services
- continue to roll out state of the art digital mammography equipment for Breast Screen Australia
- support and boost cancer research, treatment and support services, and will establish up to 24 regional cancer centres.

51 Labor will work with LGBTI communities to identify areas of anomaly, inconsistency and need, with a view to ensuring that those health needs are met.

Men's health

52 Labor is committed to improving the health outcomes of Australian men, recognising that men are generally poor at visiting their GPs and seeking care when it is needed. Labor will continue to:

- implement the National Men's Health Policy—the first such policy in Australia's history
- develop and implement policies aimed at improving male mental health and addressing the issue of male suicide
- address the gap in life expectancy between males and females
- implement policies and programs designed to address issues of prostate and bowel cancer, including the continuation of bowel cancer screening.

53 Labor will consult with the LGBTI communities about the specific health needs of gay and bisexual men, and men of transgender or intersex background, and about the provision of culturally appropriate health services, and will ensure their appropriate resourcing and promotion.

Indigenous health

54 Labor believes that significant improvement in health outcomes for Indigenous Australians is essential to closing the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

55 Labor has undertaken significant reform and investment since 2008 to:

- tackle chronic disease, particularly renal diseases
- reduce smoking rates among Indigenous Australians
- preventative health
- building health workforce capacity, including in Indigenous health organisations.

56 Labor is providing assistance to Indigenous health organisations to establish best practice management and quality care standards, and investing in the upgrade of airstrips in remote areas to enable better access to transport, medical and essential services in those areas. Labor is also expanding the Access to Allied Psychological Services Program as well as other initiatives relevant to Indigenous Australians in the National Mental Health Reform package.

Young people

- 57 Labor also recognises that young people have specific health needs. Labor will:
- place a particular focus on young people's health needs, including physical and mental health issues, age appropriate service, access to impartial medical advice, privacy of medical records, drug and alcohol education and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle
 - adopt an integrated health-based approach to youth suicide that works with existing community structures, including strategies to address depression, neglect, abuse, drug and alcohol problems, access to firearms, homophobia, school and workplace bullying, other forms of discrimination and other contributing factors.

Drug strategy

- 58 Labor will continue to respond to the tragedy of alcohol and other drug abuse and related community impact with early intervention, effective treatment and harm minimisation policies. Labor will continue to support comprehensive demand and supply reduction strategies and law enforcement. Labor is committed to an evidence-based strategy for dealing with alcohol and other drugs that aims to approach individual alcohol and other drug issues from a health and welfare perspective and includes:
- address drug abuse through national and community campaigns to help reduce preventable health issues
 - improving safety in the community by reducing the level of drug-related crime
 - reducing the spread of illness
 - keeping people alive
 - finding new ways to reduce the use, harm and supply of illicit drugs in our community.

Mental health

- 59 Labor has made mental health a national priority by delivering a significant investment of \$2.2 billion in reform and committing to ongoing action through a Ten Year Roadmap for Reform. The reform will focus on prevention and early intervention and deliver a more integrated mental health care system.
- 60 One in five Australians experienced mental illness in the previous twelve months, nearly one-third will experience a mental illness at some stage in their lives. The current system can be too crisis-driven and lacks sufficient focus on recovery and assisting people to participate in the community through areas such as employment. People can experience difficulty accessing services and navigating a fragmented and complex system. The National Mental Health Reform package includes investment to:
- improve demand management to allow mental health services to focus more on recovery, and be less crisis-driven
 - expand services and provide a single point of contact for people with severe mental illness to coordinate clinical and social support services
 - provide prevention and early intervention mental health services for all age groups and especially children and young people
 - improve access to the primary health care system for people with mental illness
 - establish a new National Partnership to help guide reform at a state level.

61 The mental health package will expand effective services. The package includes 30 new Headspace sites, to achieve national coverage of 90 sites across the country and additional programs based on the Early Psychosis Prevention and Intervention Centres model. It will also direct funding to achieve more coordinated services, such as ensuring that, for the first time, patients with severe and debilitating mental illness have one point of contact to coordinate services to meet their clinical and social care needs.

62 Labor is also establishing a new, independent National Mental Health Commission. The Commission will independently monitor, assess and report to the Parliament and the community on how the system is performing. This will increase public accountability and transparency in the mental health system and give greater national prominence to mental health issues. The Commission will publicly report on a range of performance indicators in an annual public mental health report card. The commission will focus on transparency and accountability for mental health funding and outcomes across Australia. The Commission will engage with key stakeholders in the development of the report card.

63 Labor recognises that many people struggle to access services and believes that all Australians should be able to access the appropriate mental health services when and where they need them. Labor is committed to ongoing public health education to break down the barriers to care and stigma attached to mental health issues. We commit to policies aimed at supporting and promoting good mental health and well being and policies which encourage Australians to access mental health care early.

64 We also know that people with severe mental illness are some of the most disadvantaged and socially excluded people in Australia and that more and better coordinated services, both clinical and non clinical, are needed.

65 Mental health has long been neglected and that greater investment and increased transparency and accountability are needed in the mental health system. Labor also recognises the specific mental health needs of particular population groups such as Indigenous Australians, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, LGBTI people and people living in rural and remote areas.

66 Labor is committed to ongoing national mental health reform and will focus on improving the lives of people with mental illness by:

- helping to detect potential mental health problems in the early years and supporting young people who struggle with mental illness
- targeting support to areas and communities that need it most such as Indigenous communities and socioeconomically disadvantaged areas that are underserved by the current system
- providing more intensive support services, and better coordinating those services for people with severe and persistent mental illness who have complex care needs
- taking a cross-sectoral approach to mental health and providing greater transparency and accountability in the system
- investing in medical research to increase understanding of the causes of mental illness and improve medical treatments.

67 Labor believes that investing in community mental health and supporting the families and carers of Australians with mental illness is critical to providing appropriate care and support for people with mental illness. Labor has:

- expanded community mental health services that help people live more independent lives and reconnect with the wider community, supporting them across their life, as well as responding to their clinical needs

- improved support for people with mental illness to participate in the workforce — recognising the benefits of work and the low level of workforce participation among people with mental illness— by expanding links between community mental health services and employment services
- provided core respite and support for family members and carers of people with severe mental illness, in recognition of the importance of the supportive role played by family members and carers and of the demands faced by carers of people with severe mental illness
- helped to prevent and address homelessness among people with severe mental illness.

68 Labor is committed to continuing the key role of government in leading and promoting reform of Australia's mental health service system. Labor will work in partnership with the states and territories to:

- ensure more seamless services that respond flexibly to people's needs and follow of a recovery oriented approach
- ensure that reform efforts are focused on meeting service gaps, stabilising the mental health system and rebuilding the workforce in order to create a solid base on which to grow innovation
- ensure a comprehensive range of community based and bed-based public mental health services, which give priority to community-oriented mental health care
- ensure mental health policy and services have a strong focus on illness prevention and early intervention for all age groups
- encourage improved access to appropriate housing for people with mental illness and associated disabilities, by providing a range of long term, affordable housing with flexible support, including accommodation with 24 hour staffing support
- ensure mental health services are well integrated with other relevant services such as employment, housing and GPs develop an open and transparent system of evaluation and accountability
- develop an open and transparent system of evaluation and accountability.

69 Labor will continue to support the mental health workforce and provide more support for rural and regional mental health services. Labor will:

- ensure the implementation of the new national mental health workforce strategy
- improve the supply of mental health nurses by encouraging innovative training options at the undergraduate level, including the option to major in mental health in single or double degree courses.
- expand VET sector training options for the mental health sector workers, including enrolled nurses and peer workers
- seek to improve the retention of psychiatrists and psychologists in the public system, and will work with state and territory governments with a focus in areas such as outer suburban areas and rural and regional areas
- ensure greater access to psychological services and other allied health services is available in rural and remote as well as outer suburban areas that currently are not well serviced by the fee-based Medicare system.

70 Labor recognises that suicide is a national tragedy that has devastating impacts on individuals, families and communities.

71 Labor will redouble the national efforts to prevent the tragedy of suicide including:

- provide services to those at greatest risk of suicide
- focus on direct suicide prevention and crisis intervention through identifying and addressing the causes of suicide, ensuring crisis counselling services are available and improving safety at suicide 'hotspots'

- provide services and support to men — who are at greatest risk of suicide, but least likely to seek help
- support community led suicide prevention activities that target those particularly at risk including: Indigenous Australians, men, LGBTI people and families bereaved through suicide
- promote good mental health and resilience in young people, to prevent suicide later in life.

72 Labor recognises that LGBTI Australians are a group at high risk of mental illness, in particular depression and suicidal ideation, because of issues such as discrimination and harassment. Labor has identified this group as a priority and will ensure services and resources are targeted to address the needs of this community.

73 Labor will work with and consult closely with the experts, including through the new National Mental Health Commission and an Australian Suicide Prevention Advisory Council.

Health workforce

74 Labor wants to boost Australia's health workforce—by training more doctors, nurses and other health professionals and making greater use of the skills and expertise of all health professionals. Labor will continue to build a strong health workforce and prepare Australia's health system for the challenges of the future.

75 Labor believes that all efforts must be made to ensure there is an adequate supply of highly trained doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and medical educators to all parts of the nation, so all Australians can access the health care they need.

76 Labor supports doctors to work as part of multidisciplinary care teams, to deliver a better range of services to patients and improve the standard of health care available to all Australians.

Doctors

77 Labor will:

- ensure that Australia educates and trains enough doctors to ensure they are available when and where they are needed by patients
- continue the expansion of GP and specialist doctor training places across Australia
- expand the number of emergency department doctors training in hospitals
- provide incentives to improve the supply of doctors and other health professionals to rural and regional Australia, for example by providing relief from higher education fees and/or debts (such as HECS) for those prepared to give return of service commitments through practice in non-urban areas
- work to improve the retention of doctors in the workforce
- deliver high-quality training facilities for GP training
- develop a National Training Plan with the first ever national health workforce body, Health Workforce Australia
- continue to provide medical education resources and provision of clinical educational and practice supervisors for interns and related professions
- work with both the public and private sectors to develop new training opportunities for doctors

- promote an increase in the number of people from linguistically and ethnically diverse backgrounds at all levels of the health workforce
- increase the numbers of Indigenous Australians at all levels of the health workforce, including through the new medical school in the Northern Territory
- create Lead Clinician Groups that will allow input for doctors, nurses and allied health practitioners on national and local clinical matters
- continue to support TeleHealth for the provision of specialist medical care
- support the national registration system for health care professionals
- provide incentives for health professionals to work in regional areas.

Nurses

78 Labor will continue to work to support nurses and their role in the health care system, including continuing to expand training opportunities, expanding and supporting employment opportunities through primary and acute settings and by continuing to support the extended role of midwives and nurse practitioners.

79 To support and strengthen the nursing workforce, Labor will:

- invest in providing nurses with the clinical training they need
- ensure sufficient university and VET places are available to nursing students
- recognise the valuable role nurses play, and provide nurses with the ongoing training and support they need to expand that role
- continue to support the expanded role for nurse practitioners and midwives, with access to Medicare and the PBS
- Labor believes that multidisciplinary team-based care is an important element of our health system, and that allied health professionals have an important role to play in such teams. By providing access to allied health professionals in convenient locations, GP Super Clinics make it simpler and easier to access the care that families need
- invest in expanding and supporting the aged care workforce
- expand the workforce of practice nurses in the provision of primary health care
- expand the number of scholarships for education and training in mental health and emergency nursing.

Allied health professionals

80 Labor recognises the critical role of allied health professionals in delivering good health outcomes for the community. Labor will:

- invest to provide allied and ancillary health professionals with the clinical training they need, including access to adequate supervised practice placements
- work with Medicare Locals to ensure allied health professionals are better integrated into local primary health care services
- ensure sufficient university and VET places are available for allied health professionals across Australia in areas such as social work, occupational therapy, psychology, primary health promotion counselling, family welfare services and peer support workers
- encourage and foster multidisciplinary team-based care.

Health support workers

- 81 Labor recognises the important work of health support workers in our hospitals and understands their important role in the health community. Without the contribution of these workers, the health system could not function properly. Labor will:
- continue to support fair pay and conditions and dignity at work for health support workers
 - continue to work through Health Workforce Australia to ensure the sustainability of the health workforce
 - continue to support sustainable funding for Local Hospital Networks to ensure sufficient workers can be employed to meet health needs
 - support these workers and their unions to ensure a high quality public health system is maintained.

Regional and rural health

- 82 Labor recognises the historic difficulties that Australians in regional and rural areas have faced in accessing health care compared to people in more urban areas, and that this has contributed to their poorer health status. Labor also understands that lower levels of rural health are compounded by socioeconomic inequalities. Our commitment to regional health is part of a wider rural policy that aims to restore the economic health of regional, rural and remote Australia.
- 83 Labor has already increased funding for regional health programs by 150 per cent. Labor investments have included new health infrastructure through the Health and Hospitals Fund and Rural Education Infrastructure Development Pool, a new regional health agency and greater training places for health professionals in regional Australia. GP Super Clinics, 34 of which will be in regional Australia, will also help strengthen services available in areas of need. We have also expanded several programs designed to bolster the health workforce in rural and regional areas, including relevant scholarship programs.
- 84 Labor will:
- continue to invest in training the regional and rural health workforce
 - increase local governance of health services through Local Hospital Networks and Medicare Locals
 - focus on providing opportunities for students to train in regional and rural areas, to encourage them to return to those areas once their training is completed, and to foster an appreciation of the challenges and rewards involved in practicing in areas of need
 - continue to invest in programs designed to bolster the health workforce in rural and regional areas
 - provide greater education and professional support to rural doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals to reduce the pressure they currently experience
 - support measures to encourage doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other crucial health professionals to relocate and remain in rural and remote communities
 - continue to invest in infrastructure to expand hospitals, primary health facilities, training facilities and other health services in regional Australia
 - provide Medicare rebates for regional Australians to access specialist doctors via TeleHealth services, benefiting from Labor's investment in the NBN
 - make specific efforts to reduce the rate of youth suicide in rural communities, especially among young Aboriginal people and young males
 - protect remote public hospital services through the allocation of block funding for services with low levels of activity

- expand the number of sub acute beds available in regional Australia through Multi-Purpose Services facilities
- address practical barriers to access to mental health and dementia care services for those living outside urban areas, including through provision of services where people live, or nearby, rather than hundreds of kilometres away in regional cities
- improve coordination between public, private and non-government health care providers including the Royal Flying Doctor Service
- recognise that rural and remote communities have significant Aboriginal populations.

The health system of the future

- 85 Labor recognises the role of new technology in delivering major benefits in health care, including making health services more effective, more accessible, more consumer friendly and reducing the potential for medical errors. Health will be a major beneficiary from the opportunities presented by the establishment of the NBN. At the same time, technological change needs to be carefully managed with close attention to the social and ethical implications and the need for privacy.
- 86 To drive better use of new technologies, Labor will:
- allow all Australians the opportunity to apply for a personally controlled electronic health records that will help to improve the coordination of care, reduce duplication, and reduce the opportunity for medical or medication errors
 - establish eHealth records with appropriate privacy and security protocols to protect consumers' rights
 - over time integrate eHealth records with hospital, pathology, diagnostic imaging, medication and other clinical systems
 - continue the rollout of TeleHealth services for specialist medical care in outer metropolitan, regional and remote settings and in aged care facilities and this will be delivered without any reduction of in-person access to medical specialists
 - continue to work with clinicians, consumers and the ICT industry to deliver more health care solutions into people's own homes—delivering benefits from the NBN.

Investing in health and medical research

- 87 Australia has long boasted some of the best scientists, researchers and medical pioneers in the world. The successes of our researchers—both as individuals and part of organisations—have meant less disease, better treatment, improved quality of life and longer life spans for Australians. All Australians benefit from the outcomes of health and medical research, particularly when that research is translated into improved primary and hospital care, aged care, or better preventative health strategies. Our national economy also benefits as research findings lead to the development of innovative new industries and the productivity benefits associated with better health outcomes.
- 88 Labor will seek to maintain Australia's reputation as a world leader in high quality, innovative research and development activities and will:
- continue to invest in world-class public and private sector health and medical research
 - encourage private industry to increase its investment in Australian-based research and development
 - ensure health policy is evidence-based, and that clinical practice is similarly grounded in best-practice, based on the best available health and medical research

- ensure that comprehensive ethical guidelines to cover both public and private sector research are developed and regularly reviewed and recognise the integrity and intrinsic worth of the human person. We will oppose initiatives such as human cloning, which would undermine these critical values
- protect the independence of health and medical research, free from political interference.

89 Labor is undertaking a strategic review of Australia's health and medical research capabilities in light of changes that have emerged over the last two decades including:

- the burden of disease in Australia has altered. Chronic diseases, including those associated with ageing, and mental health have replaced acute infectious diseases and acute vascular events as the leading causes of morbidity and mortality
- the mapping of the human genome and ICT revolution have both accelerated our acquisition of new knowledge, while increasing the resources required for that level of research
- the nature of research, whereby individuals and small groups could initiate and carry out meaningful research, has also changed and significantly larger infrastructure is now required. New and emerging technologies make it easier for larger groups to work together to achieve more meaningful outcomes
- there is a growing recognition of the importance of rapidly translating discoveries from basic research into treatment, and ensuring that those breakthroughs become clinical practice
- Australian's health sector is undergoing significant reform and it is important that our research activities align with that process.

90 The review will consider how to optimise the future environment for carrying out health and medical research in this country. It will provide a clear understanding of the current investment in the sector from both the government and the private sector, including industry, non-government organisations and philanthropy. It will look at our investment and how we can get greater buy-in and involvement from business.

Dental

91 Labor is committed to improving the delivery of dental services in Australia and working with the states and territories to reduce public dental waiting lists.

92 Dental health is important to overall general health and Labor recognises the importance of addressing the dental health needs of all Australians.

93 Labor is committed to addressing the dental health needs of all Australians. The lack of access to appropriate dental care for many disadvantaged Australians represents a significant gap in the provision of universal health care. Labor will work towards the goal of universal access to dental care, in the same way that Medicare provides access to affordable care for other health needs.

94 Labor will:

- expand training for dentists with a new foundation year for dentists to work in the public dental system
- work with experts to develop affordable and sustainable improvements to dental care in Australia that can address the lack of access and affordability of care for those who need it
- continue to support the Medicare Teen Dental Program that has seen over 1.3 million dental checkups to Australian teenagers
- support preventative dental care.

95 Labor will provide eligible teenagers with access to preventative dental health checks and will encourage young Australians to continue to look after their teeth once they become independent and move out of home.

Chapter 9: A fair go for all Australians

Introduction

- 1 Labor understands that there are many complex factors that influence the extent to which Australians share fully in the benefits and prosperity of our nation. A person's employment opportunities, financial means, disability, age, cultural background, gender, sexuality, housing circumstances, health and mental health can, among other things, greatly affect the opportunities that are available to them and their ability to participate fully in the economic and social life of this country.
- 2 Labor also understands that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians suffer particular disadvantage, evidenced by the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Indigenous Australians have a special place in our nation as Australia's first peoples and as the custodians of the oldest continuing cultures in the world. Labor is committed to working in partnership with Indigenous Australians to achieve the change that Indigenous people aspire to, for themselves and for their children, including closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage in Australia.
- 3 Labor prevented the global economic downturn from creating far wider disadvantage. We are committed to ensuring no one is left behind during this mining boom, despite the challenges of our patchwork economy. In the previous mining boom, large parts of the nation missed out. Labor will not let this happen this time round and will ensure the benefits are spread more fairly for all Australians.
- 4 Understanding the causes of social exclusion has been a priority for Labor. We know that people can get trapped in a spiral of disadvantage caused by family circumstances, low expectations, poor housing, unemployment, age, illness or discrimination. We know certain groups are more likely to be excluded such as jobless families, Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, people with mental illness or disability, new migrants and refugees, and people experiencing homelessness. Significant transitions in our economy can have harsh effects on already vulnerable members of our society. Labor is the only party that has shown it can manage significant transitions in our society and economy while not leaving behind those who are our most marginalised. Today, Labor faces new challenges in a patchwork economy, with an ageing and changing population in an era of global change. We will manage those transitions in the tradition of Labor and ensure that those who face financial and social vulnerability are properly supported during that transition.
- 5 Fundamental to wellbeing is a decent home. Families are the foundation of our communities and our society, and must be supported to give their children the best opportunities in life. A good and safe home is critical to this, and Labor recognises that homelessness and the housing crisis were neglected for too long in Australia. Labor believes all Australians should have access to safe, affordable and appropriate housing throughout their lives. Labor has made tackling homelessness a high priority.
- 6 Labor also understands that to have a fulfilling life, Australians need to engage in a range of activities, including cultural and sporting activities. Such activities play a role in broader social and economic goals. Arts and culture are fundamental to Australia's identity, stretching back to Indigenous traditions of creative expression. Our arts and creative industries are important to the wellbeing and fulfilment of Australians; they contribute to social cohesion and are increasingly important to our economic success, driving innovation and contributing to productivity. Sport contributes to health and fitness and has the power to bring communities together, to cross cultural, religious and political divides. It teaches self discipline and team work to our children and often is a source of immense national pride.

Labor values

- 7 We have always stood for equality. Throughout our party's history successive Labor governments have sought to achieve this by helping people overcome disadvantages based on social class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, cultural background and racial prejudice. We have always pursued the fair go, tolerance and respect. We oppose all attempts to divide Australians by pandering to prejudice. Australia's diversity is one of the greatest sources of strength in our nation. Our national unity is based on mutual respect, shared values and a commitment to work together to build a stronger Australia.
- 8 Labor is the party of opportunity for all. We believe all Australians should have the opportunity to work, to learn and to participate fully in family and community life. Spreading opportunity and participation is about access to work and the economy, and about supporting families to give their children the best opportunities in life. It is also about access to the broad range of activities and services that make life liveable and fulfilling.
- 9 Our commitment to social justice means we will be judged by our treatment of those among us who are most marginalised. Our commitment to opportunity for all extends to those who are most difficult to reach. Tackling the root causes of poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion and breaking the cycle of welfare dependency is the prerequisite to social inclusion.
- 10 We believe in and are working to create a more sustainable economy. This is a complex task. One aspect of this is the recognition that our population, and our workforce, is ageing. Increasingly, we will need to ensure that as many Australians who are able to work and otherwise contribute in a monetary sense to our economy can and are supported to make that contribution and that we seek to give those people the skills and opportunities to do so.
- 11 Labor is the party of compassion. Not everyone has the capacity to perform paid work. Labor believes these Australians deserve our respect and ongoing support, including financial support. Labor believes that carers deserve the same opportunities as other Australians to participate in work and the community, and live a meaningful life.
- 12 Labor believes in the recognition and protection of human rights and that this actively contributes to building a more inclusive society. Labor has established a new Human Rights Framework to increase community awareness of human rights and to provide greater scrutiny of compliance with our international human rights obligations.
- 13 Labor recognises the importance of community services in delivering services and in building links between Australians. Community and public services provide essential support to the most disadvantaged in our society. Community and public services meet the direct needs of individuals and create social cohesion in communities. Labor believes that the development of a highly skilled workforce in community and public services and a strong and sustainable community and public sector is vital to meeting the nation's social inclusion challenges.
- 14 Australia is an inclusive and multicultural country. Labor upholds these values. Labor recognises the economic and social contribution that has been made by immigrants and refugees throughout our nation's history. Labor regards Australia's diversity as a source of national strength and a critical factor in nation-building. Labor believes in the power of a multicultural society, underpinned by our citizenship process and respect of Australian values. Labor supports a multicultural society and will maintain non-discriminatory migration policies and respect the heritage and customs of migrants. For the Australian people to have confidence and trust in the integrity of our migration system, Labor believes it must be built upon rigorous procedures and processes that protect our national interest and our national borders while also treating individuals with fairness, dignity and humanity.

- 15 Citizenship is a critical factor in our culturally diverse society. Labor supports a citizenship process that encourages all permanent residents to become citizens. Labor's citizenship process will focus on the principles underlying Australia's citizenship pledge: Australia's democratic beliefs and laws, and the rights, responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship. Appreciating that Australian citizenship is a critical part of encouraging participation in the Australian community, Labor will remove unnecessary and unintended barriers to citizenship, particularly for vulnerable groups of migrants.
- 16 Labor is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, vilification or harassment and to harmonise anti-discrimination laws and procedures. Labor supports the appropriate protection of the religious freedom of all people. Labor will act to eliminate the exploitation, including sexual exploitation, of women and children, either in Australia or overseas.
- 17 Labor believes a creative nation is a productive nation. The arts and creative industries are fundamental to Australia's identity as a society and nation, and increasingly to our success as a national economy. Labor is delivering on election commitments to give more Australians an opportunity to participate in the arts, and develop business and services based on our creative skills and knowledge. Labor will also develop the nation's first national cultural policy in nearly two decades to build on its proud history of support for the arts in Australia.

Labor achievements

We have:

- delivered national, government-funded Paid Parental Leave to better support families when a new baby arrives and to support families to give their children the best possible start in life
- established a National Child Protection Framework, the first time a national government has committed to working with the states and territories to keep children safe from harm
- reformed family support programs to have a stronger focus on vulnerable families and children, and are reforming the payments system to ensure that payments are spent in the best interests of children, particularly children at risk
- delivered a National Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples, in particular to the Stolen Generations
- continued work to implement our social inclusion strategy, have set up a Social Inclusion Board and have commenced rolling out our Service Delivery Reform model
- agreed a national Closing the Gap strategy through COAG, agreeing actions in the areas of Indigenous health, remote Indigenous housing, Indigenous early childhood development, Indigenous economic participation and remote service delivery
- continued work to deliver housing to Indigenous people in remote communities through the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing; more than 800 new homes have been completed and 3100 houses have been rebuilt and refurbished nationally
- signed an historic Statement of Intent between the government, the Opposition, Indigenous and non-Indigenous health experts and the reconciliation movement to work together to achieve equality in health status and life expectancy
- continued to support more Indigenous Australians into work and training, through reforms to the Community Development Employment Projects program and the Indigenous Employment Program
- worked to provide more support to pensioners, including age and disability pensioners, to balance their household budgets, through significant increases and improved indexation arrangements to the pension

- begun doubling Commonwealth funding to the states and territories to deliver disability services such as respite, supported accommodation, early intervention and community inclusion through the National Disability Agreement
- increased support for people with disability to work through better access to employment services and new wage subsidies for employers
- developed a long-term plan for supporting people with disability across government, including in accessing services in health and education, and improved recognition of people with disability through the National Disability Strategy, agreed with the states and territories
- under the National Disability Strategy, established Liveable Housing Australia to promote Universal Housing Design practices in the residential building and property industry so that Australian homes are more accessible
- expanded access to supported accommodation for people with disability, and provided additional help to participate in community life, including improved access to public facilities such as libraries and cinemas
- started work to build a National Disability Insurance Scheme, laying the foundations for reform
- provided new funds for early intervention services for children with disability through the Better Start for Children with Disability and Helping Children with Autism programs, which include additional funds for children living in rural and remote areas
- developed a National Carer Strategy and are making substantial investments to support carers, including through increases to the Carer Payment and the introduction of a new, permanent Carer Supplement; the passage of legislation to recognise carers and their role; and delivering more respite and support for carers of people with severe mental illness
- invested \$550 million in a National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, which has rolled out more than 180 new or expanded homelessness services across Australia and increased funding to homelessness services by 55 per cent
- developed a National Affordable Housing Agreement and have committed to the greatest single capital investment in social housing in our nation's history, building more than 21,000 new social housing homes
- delivered a National Apology to the Forgotten Australians and former Child Migrants, and delivered additional assistance for care leavers including a national Find and Connect service
- introduced a new Human Rights Framework to embed human rights throughout our economic and social policies
- developed a new multicultural strategy and established a new independent advisory body on multiculturalism—the Australian Multicultural Council
- established a National Anti-Racism Partnership and Strategy, in recognition of the role that an anti-racism strategy can play in protecting a harmonious, multicultural society
- established the first National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework
- committed to a new National Culture Policy—the first comprehensive cultural policy since the Keating Government's Creative Nation
- established an inquiry into responsiveness of Australian Government services to the needs of Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- developed a Multicultural Youth Sports Partnership Program to create sustainable opportunities for youth from new and emerging communities to participate in community sport
- strengthened the provision of settlement services for new migrants and refugees through the development of a new settlement framework and improved settlement programs.

Labor priorities

Creating an inclusive Australia

- 18 Labor is committed to giving every Australian the help they need to access the opportunities society has to offer. Its emphasis is on supporting people to enable them to take up available opportunities for work in order to help them improve their circumstances. It recognises that policies and programs need to work in a cohesive and complementary way to deal with the variety of challenges which vulnerable Australians and disadvantaged people face. It requires sustained action across all levels of government and with the private and community sectors.
- Labor's social inclusion goal is to enable all Australians to participate in community life at all levels, through employment, volunteering, community service and education. People need the capabilities, opportunities, responsibilities and resources to participate
 - working together with business to help Australians living with disability and mental illness to participate in work and community life.
- 19 Labor's social inclusion strategy aims to make Australia stronger and fairer over time, by:
- supporting families and building strong and cohesive communities
 - maintaining a strong and internationally competitive economy
 - creating the opportunities and resources that every Australian needs to participate in the economy and community life
 - ensuring that services which are provided to all Australians meet high standards.
- 20 Labor's social inclusion priorities are based on evidence about the causes and consequences of social and economic disadvantage. These priorities, where disadvantage is often a result of multiple, complex and interconnected barriers to participation, are:
- supporting families to give their children the best opportunities in life, including a safe home, a good education and the example of a parent who goes to work each day and where necessary, assist them with parenting skills
 - support for people who do not have a source of income from employment to increase the work opportunities available to them
 - improving the life chances of children at greatest risk of long-term disadvantage, including through the National Child Protection Framework
 - reducing the incidence of homelessness
 - improving outcomes for people living with disability or mental illness and their carers
 - closing the gap in Indigenous disadvantage
 - breaking the cycle of entrenched and multiple disadvantage in particular neighbourhoods and communities
 - ensuring equitable access to services through maintaining front line access to government services in regional and rural Australia.
- 21 Labor is committed to combating racism and will respond to expressions of intolerance and discrimination with strength and, where necessary, the full force of the law.
- 22 Labor promotes, celebrates and values the social, cultural and economic benefits a multicultural society delivers to all Australians.
- 23 Labor is committed to ensuring government services are more responsive to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse Australians.

- 24 Labor is committed to a program of continuous improvement for newly arrived refugees and humanitarian entrants as they build their new lives in Australia, including:
- ensuring the provision of practical settlement services, English language tuition, case management where required and encouragement and facilitation for social inclusion, leading to full participation in Australian society
 - increasing employment outcomes for newly arrived refugees and improving employment participation in the long term.
- 25 Labor's framework for building a stronger, fairer Australia is built on five pillars:
- economic growth—maintaining a strong, internationally competitive economy. To improve social outcomes over time and between generations, government economic strategy needs to be consistent with sound fiscal and macroeconomic policy settings.
 - equitable social policy—creating the opportunities and resources that every Australian needs to participate in the economy and community life by:
 - providing an adequate social safety net
 - increasing the productive capacity of low skilled Australians through local skills, training and employment strategies
 - getting people to take responsibility for the choices that are within their control and providing support in ways that build and reinforce their capabilities, resilience and independence
 - quality government services—ensuring that services which are provided to all Australians are appropriately funded to meet high standards, especially for those Australians who need them most but may have difficulty accessing them. This means improving the quality and accessibility of mainstream services and targeting the right support directly to the most disadvantaged individuals and communities. Our service reform priorities include:
 - building a world-class education system which prepares children for work and life, including through lifting the quality of education in the most disadvantaged schools
 - building world-class health and community services which improve life outcomes, particularly for the most disadvantaged and people with disability, including through better access to primary and preventative health services, linking people to the range of supports they need before crises occur, and at critical life transitions
 - improving the supply of affordable housing
 - closing the gap for Indigenous Australians in areas including life expectancy, education, health, housing and employment
 - strong families and communities—supporting families to give their children the best opportunities in life and building strong and cohesive communities especially in areas experiencing entrenched and multiple disadvantage. Our priorities include:
 - supporting families to give their children the best opportunities in life through paid parental leave, better quality childcare and family support programs
 - supporting vulnerable families and children at risk reforms to family support programs to strengthen their focus on vulnerable people, reduce red tape for service providers and ensure that payments are spent in the interests of children
 - ensuring Australians on low or fixed incomes have access to fair and equitable financial products, including emergency relief, no- and low-interest loan schemes, matched saving schemes and financial literacy support
 - ensuring that all communities benefit from the opportunities afforded by Australia's strong recovery from the global economic downturn and from future economic growth
 - supporting strong, diverse communities, free from discrimination, violence and abuse, by confronting intolerance and promoting respect and a sense of belonging for everyone
 - supporting individuals and communities affected by disasters and critical incidents to recover and build resilience
 - improving social infrastructure in communities and supporting volunteering

- partnership for change — building new and innovative partnerships with all sectors of the economy, so that all levels of government, businesses and not-for-profit organisations are working together to build a stronger, fairer Australia, such as:
 - developing a compact with the not-for-profit sector
 - supporting new models of social enterprise and social investment
 - working with philanthropic foundations and individual donors in areas of national priority like reducing Indigenous disadvantage and improving child health outcomes
 - effectively coordinating action across sectors to prevent and reduce homelessness
 - working together with business to help Australians living with disability and mental illness to participate in work and community life.

Human rights

- 26 Labor believes a Human Rights Framework that reflects our international obligations is necessary in reflecting our commitment to fundamental rights across social and economic policies. We are committed to promoting the awareness and understanding of human rights, supporting the international human rights instruments to which Australia is a signatory, and properly funding the Australian Human Rights Commission. Labor will adhere to Australia's international human rights obligations and will seek to have them incorporated into the domestic law of Australia, and have them taken into account in administrative decision-making and whenever new laws and policies are developed.
- 27 Labor has introduced a new Human Rights Framework that:
- is investing in a comprehensive suite of education initiatives to promote a greater understanding of human rights across the community
 - through the National Action Plan on Human Rights requires each new Bill introduced into Parliament is accompanied by a statement of compatibility with our international human rights obligations
 - establishing a new Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights to provide greater scrutiny of legislation for compliance with our international human rights obligations
 - develops federal anti-discrimination laws into a single Act to remove unnecessary regulatory overlap and make the system more user-friendly
 - provides for a review of legislation, policies and practices for compliance with the seven core UN Human Rights treaties to which Australia is a party (which are listed in the framework).
- 28 Labor will review its Human Rights Framework legislation in 2014 and that review will consider whether the Human Rights Framework could be enhanced through a statutory charter of human rights or other similar instrument.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

- 29 Indigenous Australians have a special place in our nation as Australia's first peoples and as the custodians of the oldest continuing cultures in the world. Their cultures, languages, knowledge and connection to the land enrich and embolden our national identity. Indigenous disadvantage in Australia is unacceptable, and Labor is committed to working in partnership with Indigenous Australians to achieve the change that Indigenous people aspire to, for themselves and for future generations.
- 30 Labor believes that the acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as traditional owners and continuing custodians of country is an important mark of respect and reconciliation at appropriate events, including at the opening of the Federal Parliament. Labor supports welcome to country ceremonies at significant public events.

Closing the Gap

- 31 Labor believes that Closing the Gap in life expectancy, employment, health and education outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is a national priority. Closing the Gap requires enduring commitment from all levels of government and the corporate and non-government sector, and working in partnership with Indigenous Australians to deliver the change they aspire to for themselves and for future generations. Our commitment to Closing the Gap needs to be evidence-based and include measurable targets that are open and transparent to the community. These targets should include specific goals in areas such as literacy, numeracy, employment, infant mortality, life expectancy and education.
- 32 Labor will continue to work to Close the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage, by:
- overcoming decades of under-investment in services and infrastructure
 - establishing clear expectations for governments, and holding all governments to account for their progress against those clear expectations
 - supporting personal responsibility as the foundation for healthy, strong families and communities
 - building strong, respectful and robust relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, so that we can work in partnership to achieve change.
- 33 Labor is committed to working in partnership with Indigenous Australians to achieve the change they aspire to for themselves and for their children, and will work to build strong and robust relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. These relationships are critical to working in partnership to achieve that change. Labor will set clear expectations, and support those expectations with government action.
- 34 Labor will work to turn around decades of under-investment and neglect. Major reforms and unprecedented investment have been made in education, health, employment, housing and services, governance and infrastructure.
- 35 Labor has built the Closing the Gap strategy through COAG to deliver major investments to improve housing, health, employment, early childhood and to drive fundamental reforms to Indigenous service delivery over the next ten years. Labor is working through the COAG process to implement national strategies in the areas of Indigenous health, remote Indigenous housing, Indigenous early childhood development, Indigenous economic participation and remote service delivery.
- 36 Labor supports a strong focus on better Indigenous outcomes being incorporated into mainstream funding and service delivery. Labor is working with state, territory and local governments to ensure Indigenous Australians enjoy equitable access to essential services, amenities and infrastructure, including quality education.
- 37 Labor understands that all governments must be held accountable for their progress in Closing the Gap to achieve change for Indigenous Australians. Labor will work from a basis of evidence to develop effective solutions that achieve long-term and measurable improvements in the lives of Indigenous Australians. An independent and regular reporting framework has been established through the COAG Reform Council to make sure that governments at every level are accountable. The Closing the Gap strategy sets clear targets to close the gap in life expectancy, early childhood, health, education and employment, and building blocks are in place to focus effort for sustained change. The Closing the Gap targets are:
- to close the life-expectancy gap within a generation
 - to halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade

- to ensure access to early childhood education for all Indigenous four years olds in remote communities within five years
- to halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements for children within a decade
- to halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 (or equivalent) attainment rates by 2020
- to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade.

- 38 Labor puts families at the centre of our work to Close the Gap on Indigenous disadvantage, and will work with Indigenous Australians to strengthen families and give children the best start in life. Indigenous children currently experience much higher levels of disadvantage than non-Indigenous children, resulting in poorer outcomes in health and education. Through the National Partnership on Indigenous Early Childhood Development, Labor is working with state and territory governments to implement a comprehensive early childhood strategy for Indigenous children, including better access to antenatal care services, sexual and reproductive health services for Indigenous women and maternal and child health services.
- 39 Labor also recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children have a significantly greater risk of experiencing violence than non-Indigenous Australians. Labor pledges to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in particular vulnerable people and victims of violence, to overcome violence in their communities.
- 40 Labor recognises that safe and secure housing is critical to closing the gap in Indigenous disadvantage, and understands the housing crisis brought about by decades of under-investment faced by many Indigenous communities. Labor is committed to addressing the serious issues of significant overcrowding, homelessness, poor housing conditions and severe housing shortages. Labor is working with state and territory governments to reform housing and infrastructure arrangements including land tenure and tenancy management reform in remote Indigenous communities. Labor supports the aspirations of home ownership of many Indigenous Australians, and will continue to work in partnership to make this aspiration a reality for many more Indigenous Australians.
- 41 Labor is committed to closing the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation. This will require significant investment and determined, concerted action by all governments. In March 2008, a historic Statement of Intent was signed between the Australian Government, the Opposition, Indigenous and non-Indigenous health experts and the reconciliation movement to work together to achieve equality in health status and life expectancy.
- 42 Labor acknowledges that Indigenous Australians have the worst health outcomes of any Australians. On average, Indigenous Australians suffer a high burden of illness, die at a younger age than non-Indigenous people and too often do not have access to adequate health services. Labor recognises that addressing the health status of Indigenous Australians requires a comprehensive approach that looks beyond health services to include cultural wellbeing and connection to the land, education, environmental health and employment and training opportunities.
- 43 Labor recognises that improving education and employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians is critical to Closing the Gap on Indigenous disadvantage, and believes that the future of every Indigenous child should include a good education and a good job. Labor is committed to ensuring that Indigenous Australians have access to the same education opportunities as other Australians. Labor believes that, like other Australians, Indigenous Australians have a responsibility to give their children the best possible start in life, and will continue to support Indigenous families to take responsibility for getting their children to school each day.

- 44 Labor is committed to improving employment opportunities and the job readiness of Indigenous Australians. Labor is committed to halving the employment gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians by 2018. Labor has reformed employment and participation services, including the Community Development Employment Projects program, to better support Indigenous Australians to get the skills they need for employment. Labor is reforming remote employment servicing to ensure job service providers are best meeting the needs of Indigenous and other remote job seekers.
- 45 Labor is working with employers and all levels of government to create employment and training opportunities for Indigenous Australians, getting Indigenous job seekers job ready for and connected to jobs, ensuring Indigenous students make the transition from school to work, reforming remote employment and participation services, and supporting the growth of Indigenous businesses, which are proven employers of Indigenous Australians. The Indigenous Economic Development Strategy outlines these and other priorities for supporting Indigenous economic development as a basis for future policy development in partnership with Indigenous Australians.
- 46 Labor recognises the importance of community control and direct involvement of Indigenous Australians in the planning and delivery of health services. Australia must therefore train Indigenous health workers and vastly increase the number of Indigenous health professionals.
- 47 Labor notes the unacceptably high levels of incarceration experienced by Indigenous people, particularly Indigenous young people, and that these rates continue to rise. Labor notes the House of Representatives Standing Committee Report Doing Time—Time For Doing and the 1992 Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody which identify the systemic causes of incarceration experienced by the Indigenous community. Labor will take steps to address Indigenous interaction with the justice system, to reduce the rates of offending and victimisation, and to improve community safety. Suspicious deaths in custody must also be treated in a manner that maintains public confidence in the justice system.
- 48 Indigenous Australians have a special place in our nation as Australia's first peoples and as the custodians of the oldest continuing cultures in the world. Their cultures, languages, knowledge and connection to the land enrich and embolden our national identity. Labor is committed to working in partnership with Indigenous people and to building a strong and respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.
- 49 Labor acknowledges the First Nations status and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, as well as their contribution to Australian society.
- 50 Labor remains firmly committed to reconciliation and recognises the importance of reconciliation as a vehicle for healing and justice in Australian society. Labor will continue to support Indigenous Australians, the broader community and corporate and non-government sectors in driving reconciliation.
- 51 Labor delivered the Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples, in particular the Stolen Generations in recognition of the importance of saying sorry for past wrongs to healing and a bridge to building respect.
- 52 Labor is working in partnership with Stolen Generations members and their families to comprehensively respond to their needs as a distinct group, including by establishing the Healing Foundation to aid healing in Indigenous communities and continuing the programs arising from the Bringing Them Home Report. Since the Apology, Labor has boosted support for family reunion services and supported the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation. Reunion, family tracing and counselling services for members of the Stolen Generation will continue under the Link Up and Bringing them Home programs. The program is being reformed to enable better geographical coverage and more flexible delivery of these services.

- 53 Labor supports the recognition of Indigenous Australians in our Constitution. Labor has established an Expert Panel to consult with Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians on recognising Indigenous Australians in the Constitution, and will continue to work to progress options for Constitutional reform.
- 54 Labor has also supported the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration affirms the entitlement of Indigenous peoples to all human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognised in international law and provides an aspirational framework for future dialogue. Australia's formal support was welcomed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, key Indigenous UN experts and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. This support underlines Labor's desire to work in good faith with Indigenous peoples, acknowledging that our relationship will be tested and evolve over time.
- 55 Labor is committed to compliance with the Racial Discrimination Act in the development of policies relating to Indigenous Australians.
- 56 Labor has supported the establishment of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, which will give Indigenous peoples a forum to express their views and aspirations and build on the strengths of existing institutions and bodies at the national, state, and regional level.
- 57 Labor understands that land and water are the basis of Indigenous spirituality, law, culture, economy and wellbeing. Native Title and land rights are both symbols of social justice and valuable economic resources to Indigenous Australians.
- 58 Labor supports land rights and Native Title as property rights under Australian law and will work to accelerate the resolution of outstanding land and Native Title claims in partnership with other stakeholders. Labor believes that negotiation produces better outcomes than litigation and that land use and ownership issues should be resolved by negotiation wherever possible.
- 59 Labor supports the statutory recognition of inalienable freehold title under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*.
- 60 Labor believes that Australia's Indigenous cultures enrich the nation and are integral to our national identity. Labor recognises that the preservation and revitalisation of endangered Indigenous languages is a critical issue and will work to ensure adequate protection of Indigenous cultural heritage and intellectual property.

Providing opportunities for people with disability

- 61 Labor believes that all people with a disability have the same rights to health, work, adequate housing, and social participation as the rest of the Australian community.
- 62 Labor believes it is the role of government to remove the barriers that prevent people with disability from exercising those rights and ensure that they receive the support they need to participate fully in society. Labor believes people with disability should be supported as individuals and services must be tailored to their individual circumstances to improve the opportunity for people with disability to participate in work and in the community.
- 63 Labor believes that Australians with disability should have the assurance of quality care and support, and that the system that supports people with disability should focus on what they can do, and not only on what they can't.

- 64 Labor in government has put people with disability and their carers on the national agenda after 12 years of neglect under the Liberals, in which funding to states and territories to deliver disability services went backward despite the growing need for services.
- 65 Labor believes that the current system is letting people with disability and their carers down, and is not delivering the kind of care and support Australians expect for people with disability, or in the event of significant disability through accident or disease. Labor is committed to the fundamental reform of the disability services system through a National Disability Insurance Scheme that provides people with significant disability the individual care and support they need over the course of their lifetime, and supports those who care for them.
- 66 Labor will work to improve services for people with disability, including by delivering income support and employment services; focusing on early intervention, individual and personalised attention; and working cooperatively with state and territory governments to expand the availability of supported accommodation places, in-home support and individualised arrangements that support community recreational participation and inclusion.
- 67 Labor will improve access to buildings, communications, transport, health care, aids, equipment and the justice and education systems, for those with disability and their families.
- 68 Labor will support service providers to better develop, train and employ disability care workers and is committed to addressing attraction and retention of the disability services workforce. Labor believes in a strong and sustainable disability sector, and will work with staff and providers to improve sector capacity ahead of the establishment of a National Disability Insurance Scheme to ensure quality standards are maintained and enhanced including:
- enhancing skill levels and continuing professional development of the workforce
 - ensuring employment standards are protected and maintained through the National Disability Insurance Scheme funding mechanisms
 - supporting sector group employment and training models that enhance job security and work with the sector to minimise the spread of casualised work
 - maximising funding to direct client services rather than administrative and brokerage costs.
- 69 Labor will continue to work to change public attitudes to people with a disability and encourage better recognition of the rights and potential of people with a disability.

Reforming disability support services

- 70 Labor is working with states and territories to build the foundations for a National Disability Insurance Scheme. This follows the Productivity Commission's report examining reform of disability support services. We believe the system we have today is not delivering the kind of care and support Australians expect for people with disability.
- 71 Labor believes that the fundamental reform of the disability services system is necessary, and will work to build a National Disability Insurance Scheme that provides individuals with the support they need over the course of their lifetime through insurance principles. Labor supports reform of disability services that is financially sustainable.
- 72 Labor has commenced work with the states and territories to build the foundations for reform. We have established a COAG Select Council of Ministers from the Commonwealth, states and territories to lead reform in this area and an Advisory Group to the Select Council to provide expert advice on delivering the foundations for reform and preparation for launch. Labor recognises that future reform of disability services will require investment from all levels of government and consultation with all major stakeholders such as consumers, trade unions, care providers and peak bodies.

National Disability Strategy

- 73 The National Disability Strategy outlines a ten-year national policy framework to guide government activity across six key outcome areas. It will drive future reforms in mainstream and specialist disability service systems to improve outcomes for people with disability, their families and carers. It represents a commitment by all levels of government, industry and the community to a unified, national approach to policy and program development. This new approach will assist in addressing the challenges faced by people with disability, both now and into the future.
- 74 The federal, state, territory and local governments have developed the strategy as a result of a large nation-wide public consultation process, involving more than 2500 people and was formally endorsed by COAG.
- 75 The strategy sets out six priority areas for action to improve the lives of people with disabilities, their families and carers. These are:
- inclusive and accessible communities—the physical environment including public transport; parks, buildings and housing, digital information and communications technologies; civic life including social, sporting, recreational and cultural life
 - rights protection, justice and legislation—statutory protections such as anti-discrimination measures, complaints mechanisms, advocacy and the electoral and justice systems
 - economic security—jobs, business opportunities, financial independence, adequate income support for those not able to work, and housing
 - personal and community support—inclusion and participation in the community, person-centred care and support provided by specialist disability services and mainstream services and informal care and support
 - learning and skills—early childhood education and care, schools, further education, vocational education, transitions from education to employment and life-long learning
 - health and wellbeing—health services, health promotion and the interaction between health and disability systems, wellbeing and enjoyment of life.
- 76 The National Disability Strategy will guide public policy across governments and aims to bring about change in all mainstream services and programs as well as community infrastructure. It is the first time the federal, state and territory governments have agreed to such a wide ranging set of directions for disability.

Acknowledging and supporting carers

- 77 Labor values the contribution of carers to our society and believes that carers should have rights, choices, opportunities and capabilities to participate in economic, social and community life. People who care for sick and elderly relatives and people with disabilities and mental illness deserve acknowledgement and support for the job they do and their great contribution to Australia's economy. They take on enormous responsibilities that are often at both a personal and a financial cost. Labor recognises that many carers experience substantial financial hardship, reduced education and employment prospects, lower levels of health, depression and chronic grief or anger. Labor believes that carers play an invaluable role in providing care and support to loved ones, and believes that carers deserve the same opportunities as other Australians to participate in work and the community, and live a meaningful life.

78 Labor recognises the invaluable contribution of carers to the Australian community. Labor passed the Carer Recognition Act in 2010, and has delivered a National Carer Strategy to recognise and support the contribution of carers. This builds on what the government already provides for carers and complements reforms to improve supports provided through the aged care, disability, mental health, primary health care, hospital, and community care systems. The National Carer Strategy is the outcome of consultations with carers, state and territory governments, service providers and peak bodies.

79 Labor is making major investments to support carers, including:

- increasing the amount of the Carer Payment and introducing a permanent Carer Supplement to support carers to better balance their household budgets
- \$7.6 billion between 1 January 2009 and 30 June 2015 provided to state and territory governments to increase and improve specialist disability services provided under the National Disability Agreement
- \$2.2 billion over five years to drive fundamental reform in Australia's mental health system, including:
 - boosting mental health respite services, to help carers have a break or undertake education or training
 - reform to the Family Mental Health Support Services to provide improved support and strengthen families affected by mental illness
- extending automatic eligibility for Carer Allowance (child) for carers of children with Type 1 Diabetes aged between ten and 16 years
- continuing the Carer Adjustment Payment, a one-off payment to families where, following a catastrophic event involving a young child aged 0 up to 6 years old, the family is going through a period of significant adjustment as a result of the care needs of the child
- ensuring fairer access to the Carer Supplement
- ensuring fairer access to Bereavement Payment
- funding a national and targeted campaign to raise public awareness of the role and contribution of carers.

80 In addition, we:

- have extended the Demonstration Day Respite Pilot for a further 12 months and will evaluate the effectiveness of respite options for supporting carers who want to balance paid work with informal care
- will consult with stakeholders about expanding the right to request flexible working arrangements under the *Fair Work Act 2009* to employees caring for older Australians and those caring for a person with a serious long term illness or disability
- will provide funding to hold a young carer festival in each state and territory.

Homelessness

81 After a long history of neglect of homelessness and the housing crisis by the Coalition Government, the Federal Labor Government has delivered the largest ever investment to social housing and homelessness to dramatically improve housing availability and services for those who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

82 Labor is strongly committed to halving homelessness by 2020 and will continue to implement the 12-year strategy laid out in the 2008 White Paper on reducing homelessness, including:

- providing access to stable, affordable and long-term housing, with an emphasis on 'housing first' models of support that end homelessness long-term, such as Common Grounds and Foyers

- providing support services to help maintain stability in housing
- increasing early intervention and prevention services
- preventing exits from care into homelessness
- ensure appropriate access to mainstream services, such as employment services
- better integrating service provision and providing outreach support
- encouraging private sector investment in homelessness and housing affordability.

83 Labor will improve and expand homelessness services, giving particular emphasis to improving the connections between homeless shelters and mainstream services and getting the homeless into employment. Labor will focus on ending homelessness rather than just managing it. Labor is committed to ensuring that those who are homeless receive strong support through government programs and government policies such as (through) Centrelink Community Engagement Officers.

84 Labor recognises the links between access to affordable rental housing and homelessness. Labor will strongly encourage the states through future funding agreements to prioritise people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in the allocation of social housing and provided with the services to help them maintain their tenancies.

85 Labor will work with state and territories and stakeholders to continue to improve services for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Labor will also continue to enhance data collection on homelessness to ensure more reliable and timely data and to help optimise government policies.

86 In addition, Labor understands the significant connection between homelessness and mental health. Mental health can be a cause of homelessness, just like family breakdown or domestic violence can be. It can also be in itself caused by homelessness. Through Labor's investment in mental health, the government will enhance services to people with a mental health concern that are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Labor's National Housing Strategy

87 Labor recognises that having a home provides the foundation for financial, social and emotional security. If Australia is to be a truly fair and democratic society, we must not tolerate the social exclusion that arises from failing to meet this basic need. Labor believes all Australians have the right to secure, affordable and appropriate housing throughout their lives.

88 Labor is committed to policies which make housing affordable including:

- economic policies designed to keep downward pressure on interest rates and create a competitive housing finance sector
- assistance that allows low to middle income households to meet the cost of home ownership
- programs to supply affordable public, community and private rental.

89 Labor has developed a National Affordable Housing Agreement to bring together all areas of housing policy. The NAHA is the mechanism to commit all governments to joint action on housing policy and reforms including:

- expanding the supply of housing, particularly affordable rental accommodation
- delivering more efficient and effective housing, land and infrastructure development
- improving opportunities for first home buyers to enter the market
- reforming the social housing sector to improve the public and expand the not-for-profit (community) housing sector
- better integrating housing and other services to strengthen communities and build neighbourhoods that are safe, healthy and close to employment opportunities

- expanding the role of institutional investment in the provision of affordable housing
- promoting housing options that minimise adverse environmental impacts
- preventing and reducing homelessness
- improving housing outcomes, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly in remote communities.

90 Labor will review the National Affordable Housing Agreement ahead of the renegotiation of the next agreement, which will commence in June 2014. The next renegotiation of the National Affordable Housing Agreement will focus on:

- expanding the not-for-profit sector to boost the overall supply of social housing
- setting targets for expansion of stock in each state and territory
- promoting partnerships between the public, private and community sectors
- reforming social housing to ensure that growth is achieved by maximising use of available land
- promoting economic and social participation of public housing tenants.

91 Labor believes that national leadership is required to support Australians who aspire to home ownership. Labor supports, and will continue to review and implement, strategies to make home ownership more affordable including:

- First Home Savers Accounts to provide incentives and assistance for young Australians and their families to long-term savings for a house deposit
- grants for first home owners
- programs to reduce the cost of new homes by improving the efficiency of the housing sector such as streamlining planning processes or defraying the impact of infrastructure charges
- national regulation of consumer credit to ensure that all home providers are appropriately regulated and that borrowers are protected as far as possible from taking on unsustainable home loans
- the development of pathways into home ownership for low and moderate income earners such as key workers and social housing tenants including shared equity products
- exploring tax relief mechanisms for first home owners.

92 Labor acknowledges that much of the urban infrastructure to support new residential areas is a long-term community asset. Labor will work with state, territory and local governments to:

- ensure that new home buyers do not unfairly bear the costs of such infrastructure, with infrastructure charges levied on developers appropriately reflecting the cost of infrastructure related to specific developments
- find better ways to finance infrastructure that has a broader community benefit
- reduce development costs by improving national consistency in building codes and urban design regulations and streamlining approval processes.

93 Labor recognises that most rental accommodation will be provided in the private rental market. Labor will monitor the rent costs in the private rental market and examine mechanisms to maintain affordability. Labor will maintain programs to improve the affordability of private rental accommodation. Labor is committed to providing rental assistance in a way that supports people to move from welfare to work.

94 Labor acknowledges that rent costs are an issue of particular relevance in mining and other resources boom communities, where high rents driven by booms have flow on effects for long-term residents, and on local communities generally. Labor will work to ameliorate the effects of sharply rising rent costs on local communities.

- 95 Labor is committed to encouraging greater private investment in the affordable rental sector. Labor established the National Rental Affordability Scheme and will continue to expand the Scheme to stimulate investment in affordable rental stock.
- 96 Labor believes that Australia needs a strong and vibrant social housing sector to improve housing affordability for low and moderate income earners. The social housing sector incorporates public housing authorities, community housing organisations and a range of other not-for-profit housing organisations.
- 97 Labor is committing to growing and improving the social housing sector. Labor has committed the greatest single capital investment in social housing in the history of the Federation. Labor will continue to work with all state, territory and local governments to expand, reform and improve the social housing sector including:
- setting targets for a growth in public and community housing stock in each state and territory, based on a national assessment of need
 - ensuring maintenance programs operate to keep social housing stock at acceptable standards
 - supporting the renewal of public housing estates, to create mixed communities and tenures and better access to jobs, transport and integration with services
 - promoting partnerships between the public, community and private sectors
 - supporting the substantial growth of the community and not-for-profit housing sector, which is able to better leverage housing assets to build more social and affordable housing for Australians in need
 - ensuring public housing rental rebate policies do not require tenants to pay more than 25 per cent of household income in rent, unless there is an agreement with the housing authority to charge a higher rate for the provision of additional services
 - ensuring that social housing tenants are supported to maintain their tenancy by linking tenancy management with health, disability and other support services, with specific support for tenants who are vulnerable or marginalised, including tenants with a mental illness
 - improving the capacity of public and community housing to help tenants move from welfare to work, including creating employment opportunities for public housing tenants
 - ensuring that public and community housing tenants in all states and territories have access to independent mechanisms to review decisions made by housing providers
 - supporting programs which ensure that people are made aware of and can access the various forms of housing assistance which are available
 - addressing employment barriers in the social housing system and maximising employment opportunities for social housing tenants
 - working with the states and territories to encourage social housing tenants to transition into affordable housing where appropriate so that social housing is accessible to those on the waiting list and can therefore act as a safety net
 - oversee a strong national regulatory system for the not-for-profit housing sector that both encourages the expansion of the sector by attracting private finance but also avoid unnecessary red tape.
- 98 Labor believes that the rights of renters must be protected. Labor is committed to funding adequate housing consumer services. Labor will improve the rights of renters through the application of appropriate regulation and standards and will work with states, territories and non-government organisations to:
- introduce national tenancy standards for all residential tenancies, including caravan park residents, boarders and lodgers, to ensure that tenants' rights are protected in relation to matters such as eviction, unfair rents, repairs and maintenance, quality of rental accommodation, appeals and bond security

- ensure that all states and territories have independent review mechanisms for resolving tenancy disputes with the power to overturn evictions and unfair rents, determine bond or rental disputes and refer matters for prosecution where necessary
- support the regulation of tenant databases though stronger privacy protection including independent monitoring of compliance and access to affordable dispute resolution processes.

Indigenous housing

- 99 Labor believes that addressing the housing crisis in remote Indigenous communities is critical to Closing the Gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Labor recognises that chronic overcrowding, weak tenancy arrangements and poor quality housing stock contribute to the unacceptable levels of disadvantage faced by many Indigenous Australians, particularly those in remote communities.
- 100 Labor will continue to invest in new housing and in refurbishing existing housing stock to address chronic overcrowding in remote Indigenous communities. Through the National Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing, Labor has delivered more than 800 new homes and completed refurbishments to 3100 houses since 2009. Labor has also delivered improved tenancy arrangements in remote communities which ensure that responsibilities for maintenance and repair on housing stock are clear and that governments are held to account for maintaining remote housing.
- 101 Labor recognises that many indigenous Australians live in our cities and regional centres, and that the housing challenges faced in these communities differ greatly to those in remote Indigenous communities. Labor will continue to work with Aboriginal owned and controlled housing providers to deliver accessible, affordable, appropriate and secure housing that meets the social, cultural and economic aspirations of Indigenous Australians.
- 102 Labor supports the aspirations of Indigenous Australians, including in remote communities, to home ownership. Labor will continue to work with Indigenous Australians to support this aspiration and increase home ownership rates, and recognises that this may require government support for new approaches to attracting private finance in remote communities.

Women

- 103 Labor recognises that the work of courageous and inspirational women throughout our history has seen great achievements toward the equality of women and men in Australian society. However, much remains to be done to achieve equality between women and men in remuneration, sharing carer responsibilities and representation in civic and corporate institutions.
- 104 Society as a whole benefits from greater economic equality between women and men. Labor also recognises that women benefit from equality with better life opportunities, greater independence and higher incomes.
- 105 Labor believes we need to build a much stronger partnership between men and women to achieve our goals. Labor will do this through:
- an industrial relations system that protects minimum level of standards to protect the most vulnerable workers, many of whom are women
 - an industrial relations system that provides employees the right to request family friendly conditions such as extended unpaid parental leave, and flexible and part-time work following the birth of a child
 - regulation and education for employers to promote equal opportunity, gender pay equity and work and family balance

- policy and law that promotes diversity, including through the participation of women, on company boards
- a government-sponsored paid parental leave scheme for all parents
- improving the accessibility of affordable quality childcare and before and after school care
- promoting women's equal access to educational and training opportunities, particularly for women who have spent time out of the workforce to care for their children
- recognising and valuing women's paid and unpaid work
- supporting and encouraging men to take an increased role in care giving and domestic labour
- providing women access to financial literacy and superannuation information and tailoring that information to their needs, having regard to the disproportionate representation of women in part time and casual work and the long-term implications for their financial security and superannuation
- ensuring that all employees that worked for a small amount of hours in part-time or casual work will continue to receive compulsory superannuation contributions
- a government target to increase the representation of women on Australian Government boards to 40 per cent by 2015.

Reducing violence against women and children

- 106 Labor believes women and men in Australia must work together to ensure women and their children are safe from violence in their homes and in their communities.
- 107 Labor is committed to reducing the incidence and impact of violence against women. Labor believes that reducing violence against women and ensuring women's equal place in the world are important steps towards achieving gender equality. Labor will work towards this goal through the implementation of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children. The national plan provides the framework for action by the federal, state and territory governments to reduce violence against women and their children. The central goals of the national plan are to reduce violence against women and their children and to improve how governments work together, increase support for women and their children, and create innovative and targeted ways to bring about change.
- 108 The national plan focuses on preventing violence by raising awareness and building respectful relationships in the next generation. The aim is to bring attitudinal and behavioural change at the cultural, institutional and individual levels, with a particular focus on young people. The national plan will also allow women who have experienced violence to rebuild their lives as quickly as possible as part of a community-wide response. This will enable mainstream and specialist services to work together to improve their responses so that women return to full social and economic participation as soon as possible.
- 109 Noting Labor's supported and funded commitment to equal pay, Labor will further ensure that the Fair Work and anti-discrimination legislation frameworks provide appropriate protection to victims of domestic violence in the workplace, including in relation to leave entitlements.

Children

- 110 Labor believes that every child has a right to a safe, healthy and happy childhood. Labor will support families to give their children the best start in life, and will work in government for the protection of children at risk from disadvantage and abuse.
- 111 Having established the National Child Protection Framework, Labor is working closely with state and territory governments and non-government children's service providers to improve the way agencies, payments and programs interact to help prevent abuse and better protect children identified as being at risk. We are leading the way on reforms that protect and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people across the country.

- 112 Through the National Child Protection Framework, Labor is committed to:
- improved prevention and early intervention through a national, collaborative approach
 - more effective responses for children in care and leaving care
 - improved outcomes for Indigenous children
 - attracting and retaining a skilled professional workforce to improve child protection systems.
- 113 Labor is committed to ensuring that children are adequately protected from exposure to inappropriate material over the internet, at home, school and at other public access points.
- 114 Labor is working with the states and territories to develop a uniform national system for adoption. This includes work to achieve harmonisation and best practice of fees and procedures for inter-country adoption, whilst always prioritising the best interests of the child and ensuring adequate safeguards against child trafficking.
- 115 Labor supports the development of a national approach to children and the law, which includes:
- recognising the best interests of the child as a primary consideration
 - a sentencing regime based primarily upon the principles of restorative justice
 - standards for court procedures where children are involved as witnesses, victims or offenders
 - standards for support, counselling and rehabilitation services for child victims and offenders within the criminal justice system
 - support for research into causes of juvenile crime
 - the appointment of a national children's commissioner.

Young Australians

- 116 Labor believes that government should take active steps to ensure better representation of young Australians in national debate and policy development.
- 117 Labor's reinstatement of the Minister for Youth and establishment of the Office for Youth will ensure young Australians have their views considered as an important part of government decision making.
- 118 Through the Australian Youth Forum, an innovative approach driven by young people, Labor will continue to interact with young Australians on their own turf and through new technology.
- 119 Labor will ensure young Australians are supported to reach their full potential, by investing in education, training, employment and school to work transition support.
- 120 Labor will place a particular focus on young people's health needs, including physical and mental health, drug and alcohol education, the promotion of positive body image and a healthy lifestyle. Labor will work towards developing strategies to prevent and reduce the damage being caused by the increased sexualisation of children in the media and popular culture.
- 121 Labor recognises that violent activity, including street violence, is something that can affect Australians of all ages. To ensure that young people are not disproportionately affected by street violence either as victims or perpetrators, Labor will work in partnership with young people to tackle street violence and the perceptions of street violence in our community.
- 122 Through the reinstatement of funding to the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition, Labor will ensure a national voice for the Australian youth sector.

Removing discrimination

- 123 Labor supports the enactment of legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of a person's sexual orientation or gender status, and the removal of such discrimination from Commonwealth legislation.
- 124 Labor believes that people are entitled to respect, equality, dignity and the opportunity to participate in society free of hatred or harassment and receive the protection of the law regardless of their sexuality or gender identity. Consistent with this belief, in 2007 Labor audited Commonwealth laws to identify discrimination against same sex couples. In 2008, laws were passed to remove discrimination from 84 pieces of Commonwealth legislation.
- 125 Labor will ensure that all couples whether married or de facto do not suffer discrimination.
- 126 Labor will amend the Marriage Act to ensure equal access to marriage under statute for all adult couples irrespective of sex who have a mutual commitment to a shared life.
- 127 These amendments should ensure that nothing in the Marriage Act imposes an obligation on a minister of religion to solemnise any marriage.

Justice in the community

- 128 Labor believes that access to justice is central to the rule of law and integral to the enjoyment of basic human rights. It is an essential precondition to social inclusion and a critical element of a well-functioning democracy.
- 129 Labor is committed to ensuring our justice system is fair, simple, affordable and accessible, and based on principles of early intervention to assist people to resolve problems before they escalate and lead to entrenched disadvantage.
- 130 People on the margins of society often have the highest levels of interaction with the justice system. Labor believes that Australia's system of justice must provide security for all Australians, protect their property, deter and prevent crime, compensate victims where appropriate and rehabilitate offenders.
- 131 Labor supports a charter of rights for the victims of crime based on the United Nations Charter of Victims Rights (Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power 1985), and laws providing for victim impact statements, the provision of witness support and information, and standards for the treatment of victims by the criminal justice system.
- 132 Labor will continue to ensure that the Commonwealth's investigation, prosecution, defence and judicial processes are separate, independent, adequately resourced and appropriately accountable.
- 133 The independence of the judiciary is fundamental to the maintenance of both the rule of law and our democratic society. Labor believes that the courts should be accountable, and will continue to ensure judicial appointments made through a transparent and merit-based process and that all those eligible for appointment to judicial office have the opportunity to be fairly and properly considered. Labor will work with the judiciary to ensure that the judicial system is efficient and adequately funded. Labor will continue to work with the courts to evaluate and improve service delivery.
- 134 Labor will also ensure the leading law enforcement agency of the Commonwealth, the Australian Federal Police, is adequately resourced and supported.

- 135 Labor is committed to the rule of law and basic principles of justice including that people accused of a criminal offence are not compelled to incriminate themselves; that they are not subject to prolonged detention without charge; that they are given a fair trial including, in the ordinary course, the right to see and hear the evidence against them; that people charged with serious criminal offences are provided with legal representation if they are unable to afford legal representation of their own; and that evidence obtained illegally, by torture, coercive techniques or by improper investigative practice is inadmissible.
- 136 Labor is committed to providing national leadership to resource our system of legal aid in partnership with the states and territories. Labor will continue to support general and specialist community-based legal services and clinical legal education schemes.
- 137 The legal profession plays a fundamental role in the provision of access to justice. Labor supports the creation of a modern, efficient and accountable national legal services market, regulated by an independent body so as to be fully accountable and maintain the independence of the legal profession.
- 138 Labor is committed to the ongoing process of law reform so that our laws and legal system reflect the traditions, values and aspirations of all Australians, and meet the needs of our modern democratic society. Labor is committed to the adequate resourcing of the Australian Law Reform Commission, to enable them to provide independent and comprehensive advice on all aspects of law reform.

Custody and sentencing

- 139 Labor recognises the principles of sentencing as deterrence, punishment, retribution and rehabilitation and supports the just and humane treatment of accused people in custody and offenders in prison. Labor's policies and practices will conform to Australia's international human rights obligations and strive for world's best practice in its treatment of prisoners.
- 140 Labor supports the sentencing principle of prison as a last resort and the appropriate use of noncustodial sentencing options for all offenders. Labor recognises that the way in which the criminal justice system treats juvenile offenders greatly influences whether they will re-offend. The incarceration of juveniles should be a last resort, and all efforts should be made to divert children from long-term involvement in the criminal justice system. Labor will take all reasonable steps to ensure that minors are not incarcerated in adult prisons.
- 141 Because they are often discriminatory in practice and have not proved effective in reducing crime or criminality, Labor opposes mandatory sentencing and detention regimes.
- 142 Labor supports:
- efforts to reduce the unacceptably high rates of incarceration of Indigenous Australians and in particular, Indigenous young people
 - special attention to prevent deaths in custody, particularly among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
 - training of police and prison officers in understanding Indigenous culture and the Indigenous social context
 - Indigenous legal aid services that are efficient, culturally appropriate and recognises the over representation of Indigenous people with the criminal justice system
 - the adoption of international treaties allowing the repatriation of Australians in overseas prisons

- the ongoing development of ensuring consistency in sentencing so that the judiciary retains a sufficient degree of appropriate discretion so as to enable sentences to be tailored to the circumstances of each individual case
- restorative justice seeks to build a sense of community spirit and responsibility in the offender and aims to restore the victim and the community to their pre-offence state of security
- the principles of restorative justice as a just and effective way to be tough on crime
- the introduction of programs that are consistent with victims' rights, based upon restorative justice.

Family law

- 143 Labor believes that the best interests of children must be the paramount consideration in Family Law disputes. Labor believes that the resolution of family disputes should focus on counselling and family dispute resolution with litigation as a last resort. Labor will ensure community-based services such as counselling and family dispute resolution are accessible, affordable and equipped to resolve entrenched disputes.
- 144 Labor will continue to develop and implement measures to ease the anxiety and stress of family breakdown. In particular, Labor will ensure that:
- the rights of children are paramount
 - there is a just and equitable division of relationship property
 - the Family Law system protects those at risk of family violence or child abuse
 - the particular needs, customs and practices of diverse cultures are appropriately respected
 - disputes are resolved in a timely, effective and affordable way.
- 145 Labor will continue to encourage all states to be a part of the national uniform system, implemented in 2008 for de facto couples.

Migrants and refugees

- 146 Labor recognises the economic and social contribution that has been made by migrants and refugees throughout our nation's history. Labor regards Australia's diversity as a source of national strength and a critical factor in nation-building.
- 147 Australia is and will remain a society of people drawn from a rich variety of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds. Australia is and will remain a multicultural society.
- 148 To support Australia's multicultural society, Labor's migration policies will:
- remain non-discriminatory
 - respect the heritage and traditional customs of migrants and their children
 - recognise the importance of all aspects of the migration program, including skilled, family and humanitarian streams
 - be evidence-based, supported by rigorous research and evaluation
 - support Australia's social cohesion by encouraging universal respect for Australia's democratic beliefs and laws, and the rights, responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship
 - promote our cultural diversity and combat prejudice and discrimination
 - consistently oppose those who foster extremism, hatred, ethnic division or incitement to violence.

- 149 For the Australian people to have confidence and trust in the integrity of our migration system, it must be built upon rigorous procedures and processes which protect our national interest and our national borders while also treating individuals with fairness, dignity and humanity. Labor will conduct an independent review into existing decision making processes under the Migration Act, including primary decisions, merits review and judicial review, with a view to ensuring that principles of procedural fairness, natural justice and genuine independence are upheld. The review will include the interaction between the Migration Act and mainstream administrative law and the operation, structure and efficacy of the Migration Review Tribunal and the Refugee Review Tribunal. The review is to be commissioned in the first half of 2012.

To this end Labor will ensure that applications for refugee status are processed speedily, fairly and impartially based on individual merits.

- 150 Australia will adhere to its international protection obligations under the Refugees Convention and other relevant international instruments to which it is a party.

Maintaining the integrity of our migration system

- 151 Labor will ensure that all Australian jobs are regulated under Australian migration laws, consistent with Australia's international obligations. To this effect, Labor will review the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth) with a view to ensuring that the definition of migration zone encapsulates all offshore Australian jobs and industries where possible.

- 152 For the Australian people to have confidence and trust in the integrity of our migration system, Labor will fund and maintain robust border security measures that support the orderly processing of migration to our country and protect our national interest and our national borders.

- 153 To support Australia's strong border security regime, Labor will maintain:

- an architecture of excised offshore places
- the non-statutory processing on Christmas Island of persons who arrive unauthorised at an excised place, except where other arrangements are entered into under bilateral and regional arrangements

Labor is united in its commitment to prevent further loss of life at sea of vulnerable children, women and men.

Where the Australian Government is unable to implement arrangements that might be entered into under bilateral and regional arrangements, Labor is committed to:

- mandatory detention for initial health, security and identity checks for asylum seekers who arrive by boat
- using all available instruments under the Migration Act including community detention and bridging visas
- ensuring asylum seekers on bridging visas have access to the right to work and basic health and support services
- moving to a single protection visa process for asylum seekers who arrive by boat, using the current onshore arrangements for application and independent review through the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT).

Such arrangements will result in asylum seekers who arrive both by air and sea being treated the same when it comes to the processing of their claims and access to support while on bridging visas.

154 Labor recognises that the phenomenon of people smuggling has a long history arising from the need for people to escape from danger and persecution. Labor also recognises that those who decide to leave a country in perilous circumstances have the right under the Refugee Convention to determine their means of departure:

- Recognising the risk to life of people travelling on unsafe, unseaworthy and overcrowded boats, Labor will work with the United Nations High Commission of Refugees and countries of the region to expedite the claims for refugee status by asylum seekers in the region to eliminate any pull that people smugglers may have over vulnerable protection claimants.
- However, recognising the risk to life of people travelling on unsafe, unseaworthy and overcrowded boats, Labor will:
 - consider introducing further penalties for serious people smuggling offences
 - ensure repatriation of crew members who are proven to be juveniles. Crew members assessed to be minors will not be held in immigration detention centres or adult prisons.
- Labor is committed to ensuring Australia meets its obligations to the maritime principle of safety of life at sea which requires a response to assist in the rescue at sea of vessels in distress.

155 Labor will continue to take all necessary steps to eradicate people smuggling by:

- promoting effective law enforcement measures, with people smugglers subject to prosecution and harsh penalties to deter their activities
- working in close cooperation with our regional neighbours to address people smuggling at its source and prevent attempts at dangerous sea journeys by people seeking to enter Australia unlawfully
- working with regional neighbours to develop their capacity and enhance projects in home and transit countries to assist people displaced by conflict who may be vulnerable targets of people smugglers and traffickers
- pursuing strong regional and international arrangements to deter secondary movements of asylum seekers
- increasing Australia's capacity to prevent illegal fishing and smuggling operations.

Protection and humanitarian assistance

156 Labor will treat people seeking our protection with dignity and compassion and in accordance with our international obligations and core Australian principles of fairness and humanity.

157 Australia will comply with the non-refoulement and all other protection obligations we have voluntarily assumed in signing the Refugee Convention and other relevant international instruments and actively engage in the work of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and other relevant international and regional agencies.

- Labor will continue Australia's generous humanitarian program, including providing appropriate support for the travel and resettlement of refugees and others requiring Australia's protection, and contribute to international aid efforts to alleviate the pressing humanitarian needs of displaced persons
- Labor will seek to lead debate on the new agreements and understandings required to ensure that the Refugee Convention and the international protection system function effectively over the long-term, including encouraging countries in our region to provide protection to those in need
- Labor will contribute to the development of further multilateral solutions, recognising the importance of regional neighbours, with the aim of eradicating people smuggling, deterring secondary movement and enabling refugees to access appropriate processing and settlement outcomes

- Labor aspires to progressively increase Australia's humanitarian intake to 20,000 places per year, should bilateral and regional arrangements prove to be successful in reducing irregular migration to Australia
- Labor recognises that, under the Refugee Convention, asylum seekers have the right to seek protection and asylum
- Labor will ensure that asylum seekers who arrive by irregular means will not be punished for their mode of arrival.

158 Recognising that irregular movement is a regional issue that requires a co-operative regional approach, Labor will engage with Australia's neighbours to seek innovative and effective solutions to the irregular movement of people through the region. This approach will include multilateral engagement, particularly through the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, and bilateral arrangements of a type envisaged by the Regional Co-operation Framework agreed at the Bali Process Ministerial Conference in March 2011.

159 Labor's policies with respect to asylum seekers who travel to Australia irregularly by boat will be based on the following considerations:

- irregular boat travel to Australia, particularly when facilitated by people smugglers, is extremely dangerous for asylum seekers and Australian rescue personnel. As demonstrated by a number of high-profile tragedies, including SIEV X, SIEV 36 and SIEV 221, such ventures often result in deaths at sea. A genuinely humanitarian policy must discourage such methods of travel, subject to compliance with Australia's international obligations under the Refugee Convention
- cooperation with regional partners to improve living standards and protection outcomes for asylum seekers in transit countries is an important disincentive for those considering the dangerous boat journey to Australia
- increasing the humanitarian intake of genuine refugees from source and transit countries creates an orderly pathway to resettlement in Australia and provides asylum seekers with an alternative to irregular boat travel to Australia.

160 Labor's protection policies will be based on the following principles:

- access to protection in countries of first asylum and transit will be supported so as to reduce pressure for dangerous irregular movement
- protection visa applications made in Australia will be assessed by Australians on Australian territory
- those found to be owed Australia's protection under the Refugee Convention and other international instruments will be given permanent protection under the *Migration Act 1958* and will be provided with appropriate settlement support and services
- those not found to be owed Australia's protection under the Refugee Convention and other international instruments will be promptly returned
- the Temporary Humanitarian Visa will be retained for situations where temporary safe haven is required.

161 For the Australian people to have confidence and trust in the integrity of our migration system, protection claims made in Australia should be assessed and reviewed in a manner which balances efficient decision making with procedural fairness and ensures that our international human rights obligations are met.

- the assessment and review of protection claims should be underpinned by robust, efficient and transparent processes that ensure fair and consistent outcomes, including access to review and independent advice

- the assessment and review of protection claims must be independent and free from any political or diplomatic interference
 - the processing of protection claims must be streamlined to improve client service, to enhance the quality of decision-making, to provide more efficient pathways for prompt resolution of visa status and to alleviate the courts' immigration case-load burden
 - to this end Labor will ensure that applications for refugee status are processed speedily, fairly and impartially based on individual merits
 - Labor will require the National Security Legislation Monitor to advise on establishing a mechanism for independent review of the adverse security assessments that ensures procedural fairness while recognising that processes may be required to protect intelligence sources and methodology
 - Labor will explore options other than indefinite detention including third country resettlement to deal with refugees with adverse security assessments in a way that does not jeopardise Australia's national security interests.
- 162 Exercise of personal ministerial intervention powers should be limited to cases raising claims that are unique or exceptional for humanitarian or other compelling reasons, and which cannot be appropriately resolved through normal processes. Under legislation passed by Labor, complementary protection claims will be considered by way of the protection visa framework.
- 163 Labor recognises that people residing in the community should not be arbitrarily deprived of the right to work while their claim is being processed, as occurs under the 45-day rule. Labor has abolished the 45-day rule and introduced arrangements that reflect relevant international obligations and grant work rights to all people who have actively and genuinely pursued resolution of their claims.

Compliance and immigration detention policy

- 164 Labor expects that people who come to Australia enter and leave in accordance with their visa conditions.
- 165 Labor is committed to the integrity of Australia's visa programs, including student visas.
- 166 Labor's immigration processes should be underpinned by robust, efficient and transparent processes focused on prompt and fair resolution of status for those seeking migration outcomes.
- 167 For the Australian people to have confidence in the integrity of our migration system, Labor will:
- employ a risk-based approach to the management of immigration clients which emphasises robust, efficient, consistent, independent and transparent processes which support the prompt resolution of immigration status
 - enforce compliance with visa conditions that support the orderly processing of migration to our country.
- 168 Under Labor's policies, the presumption will be that unauthorised arrivals who enter for the purpose of seeking asylum will, after appropriate checks are undertaken, be granted bridging visas with work rights and means-tested access to migration assistance while the merits of their applications are assessed: persons will be detained only if the need is established.
- Labor's humane and risk-based immigration detention policies and practices will be guided by key immigration detention values:
- to support the integrity of Australia's immigration program, three groups will be subject to mandatory detention:
 - all unauthorised arrivals, for management of health, identity and security risks to the community. Labor will strive to ensure this is for 90 days only

- unlawful non-citizens who present proven unacceptable risks to the community
 - unlawful non-citizens who have been proven to persistently refuse to comply with their visa conditions
 - children, and where possible their families, will not be detained in an immigration detention centre (IDC) and, wherever appropriate, will be released on a bridging visa
 - detention that is indefinite or otherwise arbitrary is not acceptable and the length and conditions of detention, including the appropriateness of both the accommodation and the services provided, will be subject to regular review
 - detention in an immigration detention centre is only to be used as a last resort and for the shortest practicable time
 - people in detention will be treated fairly and reasonably within the law
 - conditions of detention will ensure the inherent dignity of the human person.
- 169 The management of immigration detention centres will remain with private sector management for the term of the current contracts. A government evaluation to determine the future form of detention facility and detention services management will be commenced no later than two years prior to the end of the term of the current contracts. The evaluation process must take into account the views of all stakeholders, including the relevant trade unions.
- 170 Recognising the inequities of the policy of charging immigration detainees a daily maintenance rate while in immigration detention, Labor has extinguished such detention debts and will oppose any attempts to reinstate this practice. Labor supports existing specialised and tailored government services for those most in need to connect new arrivals to Australian society and to ensure that there is a seamless transition to mainstream services provided for by other levels of government. Labor will review the financial and other assistance to people coming to Australia under the Special Humanitarian Program to better address instances of financial hardship.
- 171 Settlement support services include:
- orientation courses for humanitarian entrants prior to arrival in Australia
 - initial intensive settlement assistance for humanitarian entrants for up to 12 months after arrival
 - specialised case management services in circumstances where there are significant barriers to successful settlement
 - orientation and referral services to build self-reliance in individuals and families and foster community participation and development
 - access to the Translating and Interpreting Service.
- 172 English language tuition is an essential settlement service and critical to the achievement of full social and economic participation. Labor will continue to provide:
- tailored language programs within a settlement context combined with appropriate support through childcare and case management
 - opportunities for eligible migrants to continue to learn English while developing knowledge, skills and experience in the Australian workplace
 - language training framed to introduce new entrants to Australian workplace culture and practices delivered through a range of formal and informal settings.
- 173 Labor recognises the importance of access to culturally appropriate employment services in achieving full participation.

- 174 Labor policy will improve the availability and integration of Commonwealth-funded migrant and settlement services. Labor will ensure settlement service policies are:
- informed by advice from the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council, the Settlement Council of Australia and other key stakeholders and the community
 - coordinated in partnership with state and territory governments, local councils, community organisations and service delivery providers.
- 175 Labor acknowledges the positive effect regional settlement can have on rural locations. Labor supports the settlement of suitable humanitarian entrants in regional locations with the support of state and local governments and local communities.
- 176 Labor is committed to ensuring that services across government are culturally responsive and universally accessible. Consistent with Labor's social inclusion agenda, government policies will be receptive to the needs, circumstances and backgrounds of all members of Australia's culturally diverse population.
- 177 Labor will develop a Pacific Climate Change Strategy, which will include:
- taking a leading role in working with the international community on planning for the impacts of climate change
 - a continuation of the proposed long-range climate change prediction project
 - assistance for mitigation, adaptation and emergency response efforts, such as protecting fresh water sources from salt water contamination and dealing with infrastructure decay caused by coastal erosion
 - assisting with intra-country relocations when citizens have to be moved from low-lying areas to higher ground
 - building resilience to climate change in the Pacific region
 - if in the longer term permanent migration becomes necessary for some Pacific Islanders, working in close consultation with the region to ensure that Pacific Islanders' key interests are recognised, noting that Pacific Island nations have expressed a clear desire for Pacific peoples to continue to live in their own countries where possible.

Sport

- 178 Labor will continue to entrench sport and physical activity as a central part of the preventative health agenda and encourage a lifelong love of sport.
- 179 Labor believes that sport is a vital tool in facilitating outcomes in health and mental health, social inclusion, tourism, education, community capacity building, multicultural affairs, Indigenous affairs, regional development, trade, foreign affairs, and creating cultural identity.
- 180 Labor recognises that sport is an important platform for social inclusion in the settlement of young migrants and refugees, and can provide opportunities for engagement with their local community. Labor is committed to ensuring all levels of sport in Australia are inclusive of culturally and linguistically diverse Australians.
- 181 Labor will continue to support young Australians, including young people in regional areas, to participate in physical activity and to compete in recognised sporting competitions.
- 182 Labor is committed to supporting Indigenous sport and using participation in sport to contribute to the Closing the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage.

- 183 In recognition of the need to further increase the profile of women's sport in Australia, Labor will continue to support the promotion of women's sport and efforts to increase its media coverage.
- 184 Labor is committed to greater leadership and mentoring opportunities for women in sport.
- 185 Labor is committed to supporting sport for people with disability and establishing pathways for athletes with a disability.
- 186 Labor values the role of the coach, officials and volunteers and believes they should be supported.
- 187 Labor will continue to work to maximise the water safety of Australians, especially children.
- 188 Labor is committed to keeping Australia at the forefront of Olympic, Paralympic and other international sport and maximising our success on the international stage by continuing to support our elite athletes and ensuring elite pathways.
- 189 Labor believes success on the international stage creates role models for young Australians and encourages participation in grassroots sport.
- 190 Labor is committed to strengthening Australia's sporting systems and will continue to ensure that the Australian Institute of Sport is a world-class facility for elite athletes.
- 191 Labor will ensure that Australia is at the forefront of anti-doping and fighting match fixing in sport and will provide leadership in anti-doping and the fight against match fixing on the international stage.
- 192 In partnership with sport, Labor will continue to tackle the issue of illicit drug use and binge drinking by athletes and in the wider community.

Arts and culture

- 193 Labor recognises the important role played by Australia's cultural institutions and commits to supporting these institutions to collect, preserve and make available Australia's cultural heritage. Labor believes arts and culture contribute to building a more creative and productive nation. People of all ages and from all walks of life can participate in arts events and education and can express their creativity in an array of different cultural forms. Labor believes cultural policy is not just about supporting the arts, it is about strengthening communities and developing our creative culture so that we are ready to take on the challenges and opportunities of modern life. Labor also understands that arts and culture drive innovation across the nation and contribute to productivity. The Labor Government committed to a new National Culture Policy in the 2010 election Arts Policy document Investing in Creative Australia. This will be the first comprehensive cultural policy since the Keating Government's Creative Nation.
- 194 A new National Culture Policy will reflect the important role that arts and creativity play in the daily lives of all Australians, and it will help to integrate arts and culture policy within our broader social and economic goals. It will strengthen the links between creative culture and priorities to boost productivity, drive innovation and strengthen community cohesion.
- 195 The National Culture Policy will relate to core arts, creative industries and cultural heritage, in particular Australia's Indigenous cultural heritage. The National Cultural Policy will take into consideration a number of other important reviews and initiatives:
 - the review of Private Sector Support for the Arts
 - the review of Major Performing Arts Sector

- a Creative Industries Strategy for 21st Century Australia
- the Convergence Review
- the review of the National Classification scheme
- the National Design Policy
- the National Arts Curriculum.

196 The National Culture Policy has four goals:

- to ensure that what the government supports — and how this support is provided — reflects the diversity of a 21st century Australia and protects and supports Indigenous culture
- to encourage the use of emerging technologies and new ideas that support the development of new artworks and the creative industries, and that enable more people to access and participate in arts and culture
- to support excellence and world-class endeavour and strengthen the role that the arts play in telling Australian stories both here and overseas
- to increase and strengthen the capacity of the arts to contribute to our society and economy.

197 In the context of the development of the National Culture Policy, Labor remains committed to:

- an active role for public arts and culture programs in schools, regional communities, Indigenous communities and throughout our cities and suburbs
- measures to maximise the participation of all Australians, especially in disadvantaged and marginalised communities, in Australia's cultural life
- supporting and funding the Australia Council as an independent and expert grant making body which works closely with arts organisations and individual artists
- ensuring that the Commonwealth maintains and develops the great national collecting institutions, and that they are able to tour their collections to ensure access by all Australians
- supporting and financing the film and television industry, encouraging increased private investment, training further talent and assisting market development through Australian local content requirements on free to air and pay television as well as diverse new technologies
- measures to ensure Australian stories continue to be created and told by Australian performers and crew in Australian film and television production
- the role of strong local markets in supporting the development of the Australian music sector. Labor will maintain and strengthen access to local markets and support for independent and emerging artists building overseas careers.

198 Labor supports the legal framework of copyright as a necessary part of a program to ensure that the income generated by arts, culture and heritage is fairly distributed between the creators and the institutions and entrepreneurs who make it available. Labor affirms that a successful copyright framework will support the education, arts, culture, and heritage of Australia through:

- the development and maintenance of a national identity in the Australian creative industries
- the development of new and emerging Australian creative talent
- the meeting of consumer expectations in speed to market
- certainty of supply and diversity of Australian-produced intellectual property
- the promotion of competitive, sustainable and innovative Australian creative industries
- the promotion of exports of Australian creative product to foreign territories.

Assistance to families

- 199 Labor recognises the developmental, health, and social benefits of children participating in sport and other cultural activities. Labor recognises that the financial cost to families of their children participating in such activity can be an obstacle to participation. Accordingly, Labor will examine ways to assist families to maximise their children's participation in sport and other cultural activities.

Animal welfare

- 200 Labor believes that all animals should be treated humanely and will work to achieve better animal welfare through harmonisation of relevant federal, state and territory laws and codes to ensure consistent application and enforcement of animal protection statutes. Labor will establish at a federal level an independent Office of Animal Welfare to monitor, investigate and be able to make recommendations to government regarding matters impacting on animal welfare across all areas of animal use.

Chapter 10: Open and accountable government

Introduction

- 1 Labor wants to strengthen our democracy and give Australians a real say in shaping our future. As the only Australian political party that pre-dates Federation, Labor has a long history of support and respect for Australia's democratic institutions and values and the Westminster Parliamentary tradition from which they are derived. Since its earliest days, Labor has fought to strengthen our democracy.
- 2 Labor has always been the party that has invested in our nation's public services and public institutions, to serve the common good, achieve broader social democratic goals and give individuals access to the support they need to fully participate in their community. This commitment holds strong today.
- 3 Our public services and institutions have a critical role to play in building the Australia of the 21st century. Labor recognises the importance of long term planning to fund the public service. This will ensure that the public service can attract and retain the high skilled employees needed to provide high quality policy solutions that address the big issues facing Australia, and provide better services now and in the future.
- 4 Labor understands that changes in our population, society and economy are creating new needs and that modern democratic engagement and service delivery must reflect those needs. As communication technology improves, our national broadcasters are able to provide more content to more diverse audiences. As technology increases access to government, our public services and elected representatives should become more accountable. As our population ages, services will need to adapt to meet the demand for greater choice and control. Labor recognises that these changes present new challenges to our democratic processes, our public services and the community and not-for-profit sector.

Labor values

- 5 Labor believes our Constitution and Federation need to be modernised to resolve the funding and administrative problems that have prevented government effectively dealing with the challenges of today. This includes ensuring our constitutional framework recognises our role as an independent nation and our federal funding and administrative structures reflect our status as a nation, not as a number of colonies.
- 6 Labor believes government should be transparent and driven by electoral mandate, not hidden and unaccountable power. Whether through donations to political parties, lobbying activities restrictions on freedom of information, government should be free of the vested and sectional interests that undermine the ability of government to act in the national interest.
- 7 Labor is committed to democratic and accountable government. This means upholding the highest standards of transparency and probity in the conduct of government and public services. It means a vital role for our public media and broadcasting in informing and educating our citizens. Labor also believes an effective democracy requires a healthy civil society. Labor supports the development of the community and not-for-profit sectors, voluntary groups and methods to increase direct public involvement in decision-making and governance.

- 8 Elections and voting are at the heart of a functioning democracy, and ensuring that the democratic franchise is able to be exercised by all Australians regardless of social class, race or background is an enduring Labor value. Labor believes that Parliament should always be accountable to voters, because effective oversight and scrutiny deepens our democracy, allowing policies to be properly evaluated, and judged at subsequent elections and providing a more informed and active polity.
- 9 Labor has always had a vision of government as an enabler: providing the necessary regulation and opportunities for achieving our broader social democratic goals. Labor is committed to shaping government so that it delivers through collaboration and partnership and encourages deliberative solutions to the complex challenges many Australians face.
- 10 Labor's tradition of nation building extends beyond our essential economic and physical infrastructure. For Australia to be a fair, inclusive and well governed society, Labor believes in investing in public services and institutions, the community sector and our national and community media and broadcasting infrastructure.
- 11 Labor recognises the important role of Australia's public services in providing essential services for the entire community, while also providing long-term policy advice for government that serves the national interest. Labor believes public services should be efficient, high quality, effective and accountable and they should also be protected from interference from government, the private sector or political parties with decisions to outsource public services not made solely on cost.
- 12 Labor acknowledges that the Productivity Commission is an important tool to assist government in policy making. However, Labor recognises that the Productivity Commission should, as part of its charter, be obliged to take account of social and environmental considerations, as well as economic considerations, in reporting and making recommendations. Labor will ensure the Productivity Commission is highly skilled and reflective of the broader community including trade unions, non-government organisations, economists, the business and investment community and academia.
- 13 We believe government should be open to increased citizen participation in decision making, particularly in light of increased opportunities provided by technology and communications. Labor believes the public should have a greater say in decisions that affect their lives and a greater involvement in the services they need and value.
- 14 Labor believes in a flourishing civil society to counter-balance market forces and the inherent power of the state. Labor supports the community and not-for-profit sectors and recognises the pivotal role they play in civil society, particularly in advocating for and serving marginalised Australians. Labor supports both the sector's advocacy role and the major contribution it makes to delivering essential services to people who need those services most.
- 15 Labor is committed to high quality media that is accessible and diverse, and provides choice and breadth in information, opinion, education and entertainment. Labor believes that a nation as large and diverse as ours needs national broadcasting institutions that are publicly owned and run in the national interest. These institutions are central to building national unity, and to recognising the diversity that makes us a strong community.

Labor achievements

We have:

- delivered measures to make government more open and accountable, such as holding Community Cabinets across the country. Labor is committed to continuing Community Cabinet meetings across Australia and will ensure that Ministers at the highest levels are made available through these public forums
- introduced the first Federal Lobbying Code of Conduct to help build trust in government processes. For the first time, over 500 lobbyists who represent third parties have publicly registered. Labor is committed to the ongoing use of the Lobbying Code of Conduct and Lobbyist Register
- introduced new guidelines on government advertising, which take the politics out of government communications, and have set up an Independent Communications Committee to independently review campaign advertising
- strengthened Freedom of Information legislation
- introduced a revised code setting out new Standards of Ministerial Ethics, requiring Ministers to act with integrity and fairness
- required Ministers to divest themselves of all shareholdings other than through broadly diversified investment vehicles, managed funds or trust arrangements
- introduced a 'cooling-off' period of 18 months before former Ministers can take up jobs with lobbying and other private sector companies in their previous areas of responsibilities; and 12 months before advisers can work as third party lobbyists in their former areas of expertise
- introduced the first Code of Conduct for Ministerial staff
- prohibited electoral fundraising at the Lodge or Kirribilli House
- introduced and published the first Annual Report on Ministerial and Parliamentary Staff
- developed a National Compact Working Together with the not-for-profit sector
- established a Not-for-Profit Sector Reform Council to help drive the government's plans to reform the sector
- developed, in partnership with the sector, a National Compact and set up a Not-for-Profit Sector Reform Council to support its implementation for a vibrant, independent and innovative not-for-profit sector
- provided funding to the not-for-profit section to:
 - develop additional emergency relief and financial counselling services
 - support innovative projects such as low interest loans and matched savings schemes
- established a career transition and support centre in the APSC to provide redeployment opportunities for public servants and built on this through detailed redeployment principles.

Labor priorities

Progressing constitutional reform

- 16 Labor has a long-standing commitment to constitutional reform to modernise our democratic structures and make our public administration more effective, efficient and prepared to deal with the challenges of the 21st century. Labor believes that first and foremost our Constitution should reflect Australia's status as a parliamentary democracy and an independent nation.

- 17 Labor supports the recognition of our first peoples in the Australian Constitution. The recognition of Indigenous peoples in the Australian Constitution is an important step in building a more reconciled nation based on strong relationships and mutual respect. Labor supports changes that will reflect the unique and special place of Indigenous people in our nation. Labor will work to build public support for Constitutional recognition of Indigenous Australians.
- 18 Labor believes that modernising our Constitution also entails a transition to an Australian Republic, with an Australian Head of State, who can fully represent our traditions, values and aspirations as a nation. Labor is committed to consulting with the Australian people, other political parties and the states and territories as to the form that the Republic should take. Labor will promote community debate about the advantages and disadvantages of the various republican models. Labor will conduct plebiscites to establish support for an Australian Head of State and the preference for different forms of a Republic. When a preference has emerged Labor will initiate an appropriate referendum under section 128 of the Constitution.
- 19 Labor recognises that constitutional reform must be underpinned by popular ownership of the reform agenda, broad political support and effective community education. Labor remains committed to constitutional reform that:
- entrenches the principle of one vote, one value for all elections, to ensure equal participation for all regardless of place of residence
 - allows simultaneous, fixed four-year terms for the House of Representatives and the Senate
 - prevents the Senate rejecting, deferring or blocking appropriation bills
 - removes the barrier on election to parliament of a person holding an office of profit under the Crown, provided that office is relinquished on election
 - allows all Australian citizens to contest Commonwealth elections
 - removes racially discriminatory provisions from the Constitution, in particular by amending or removing section 25 and section 51(xxvi) to ensure they cannot be used to discriminate against Indigenous Australians
 - makes clear the capacity of the Commonwealth and the states and territories to work together using the full range of cooperative schemes to achieve harmonised laws and national enforcement regimes
 - recognises the role of local government.
- 20 Labor will continue using the COAG process to modernise our Federation and improve the delivery of important services in areas like health, education, transport, water, emergency services and Indigenous equality.

Reforming electoral law

- 21 Labor is committed to the fair, open and transparent operation of our electoral system and to the essential democratic principle that every person should have the right to full participation in it.
- 22 Labor will ensure that all Australians, and particularly first-time voters, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, Indigenous people, people in remote locations and young people are not excluded from the electoral system.
- 23 Labor will improve the integrity of the electoral system and, most urgently, restore transparency, openness and accountability to the funding and disclosure regime.

- 24 Building on the improvements made to date, Labor will:
- encourage public debate about reform of our electoral laws including enrolment and electoral participation
 - ensure that disadvantaged groups are not excluded from the democratic process
 - introduce a new scheme for the regulation of political financing, including donations, other revenues, expenditures, and record-keeping
 - ensure maximum opportunities for enrolment and involvement in our electoral process
 - remain committed to constitutional reform that allows simultaneous, fixed four-year terms for the House of Representatives and the Senate
 - continue to build confidence in the system by effectively investigating and reporting all claims of electoral malpractice
 - commit to advance the cause of making electoral enrolment and voting as quick, simple and flexible as possible, seeking to maximise the franchise consistent with maintaining the integrity of the system. Labor will further amend electoral legislation to ensure the capacity of Australians to participate in the electoral system is undiminished and extended where possible and appropriate.
- 25 Labor acknowledges the decision of the High Court during the 2010 election campaign on the matter of new voters. Labor has legislated to give effect to that decision and will consider further amendments to allow enrolments as close to the election date, up to and including polling day.
- 26 Labor recognises the important role of the Australian Electoral Commission in ensuring the integrity of the electoral system and will provide the (AEC) Commission with the appropriate funding needed to meet its responsibilities.

Ensuring women's equal place in a stronger democracy

- 27 Labor is committed to promoting the equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes.
- 28 Labor is committed to promoting and supporting women's leadership in Australia's parliaments, governments, senior levels in the private sectors and communities throughout Australia.

Labor will work to ensure women's equal place in the world by:

- maintaining an active role in international forums to promote the rights of women including institutions formed under the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- ensuring the Sex Discrimination Act and the powers of the Commissioner are adequately protecting women against discrimination on the basis of gender and family responsibility
- supporting women's representative organisations to participate in policy development
- applying sophisticated gender policy advice and analysis to policy development of the government
- supporting and promoting women's leaders in all facets of Australian society through a range of regulatory and educative measures
- supporting the greater representation of women in all of Australia's parliaments
- supporting diversity in corporate Australia, including in appointments to boards and at the executive level
- adopting a target for government boards that by 2015 at least 40 per cent of members should be women and 40 percent of members should be men

- recognising the particular issues faced by Indigenous women, women of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women with disabilities, rural women, young women, lesbians, bisexual women and women of transgender or intersex background, and ensures that government policies and programs are funded, accessible and appropriate to their needs.

29 Labor will require as a condition of all Commonwealth grants and other financial support to organisations that they perform their contracts in accordance with state, territory and Commonwealth anti-discrimination laws.

LGBTI place in a stronger democracy

30 Labor believes in a society that embraces diversity. Labor will support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Australians and ensure that they are safe, valued and respected.

31 Labor recognises that the Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity provide a substantial guide to understanding Australia's human rights obligations in relation to LGBTI Australians and their families.

32 Labor recognises that LGBTI Australians and their communities contribute much to Australian society. Labor will work with LGBTI Australians and representative groups to:

- expand integrated advice and support services for LGBTI Australians, and ensure their engagement in the policy development of government
- support GLBTI Australians with particular needs, such as those who are young, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, from CALD backgrounds and those living in rural, regional and remote Australia
- strengthen laws and expand programs against discrimination and harassment on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity
- support and engage with communities and stakeholders to provide input into government decision making, including consideration of a LGBTI ministerial advisory committee. Labor will strengthen support for LGBTI people by integrating advice and support to ensure they are supported in government policy development.

33 Labor will strengthen support for LGBTI Australians by integrating advice and support services and ensuring they are engaged in the policy development of government.

34 Labor condemns sexual violence, or any derogatory behaviour and harassment towards all people. Labor recognises the harm that such actions cause and will pursue policies that prevent discrimination.

35 Labor will:

- establish appropriate mechanisms to coordinate and promote both policy development and the initiatives across government needed to ensure effective implementation of policies, with adequate ongoing funding to ensure that all government services are provided in a way that furthers those policy aspirations in practice
- strengthen partnerships between the Commonwealth and LGBTI community groups in the delivery of support services for LGBTI Australians and their families
- investigate the establishment of a National Gender Centre to provide support and advocacy for transgender and intersex Australians, which could also have an education and training role to promote awareness about transgender and intersex issues to the wider public
- review documentation requirements, including passports and birth certificates, as they affect transgender and intersex people, to facilitate their equal enjoyment of human rights without discrimination and to promote identification options beyond binary male / female.

- 36 Labor will build upon previous legal achievements to implement equality in practice, so that every area of policy is inclusive of the needs and interests of all Australians-including lesbians and gay men, and bisexual, transgender and intersex people-without discrimination.
- 37 Building on the 2008 reform of 85 Commonwealth statutes that discriminated against same-sex couples and their families, Labor will:
- ensure that the impact on LGBTI people is considered in developing bills or regulations
 - ensure LGBTI Australians enjoy equality before the law, and have access to every state institution without discrimination.

Transparent government

- 38 Labor has introduced major reforms to Freedom of Information (FOI) to strengthen citizens' rights of access to government material and bring down the costs of FOI including:
- strengthened the public's right to access documents under FOI by minimising exemptions and broadening the application of public interest tests under the Act
 - streamlined and improved review processes
 - extended FOI to information held by other entities delivering government services
 - established an FOI Commissioner within the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
 - abolished the power to issue conclusive certificates under the FOI Act and the Archives Act
 - restored the role of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and the Courts in determining disputes over FOI requests
 - proactive release and reporting of information by agencies on their operations and policies.
- 39 Labor will continue to promote transparency and accountability by maintaining and promoting a pro-disclosure culture across Australian Government agencies.
- 40 Access to government information and decision-making facilitate the workings of our democratic system, allowing the public and community to obtain reasonable access to government records and documents that affect their lives. Labor has a long standing commitment to the creation of more comprehensive and effective public interest disclosure laws, to enhance the openness and transparency of public administration. Labor will work with stakeholders, including trade unions to create new arrangements for the handling of public interest disclosures within the federal public sector. The legislation will include clearer procedures governing how agencies deal with public interest disclosures protections extending beyond current public servants, and applying to the full range of government services the provision of a clear framework in reporting procedures and requirements central monitoring, oversight and reporting to government on public interest disclosures enhanced protections for whistleblowers.

Protecting privacy

- 41 Labor believes an individual's right to privacy is a fundamental political, civil and human right that must be protected. We believe it is the responsibility of government to provide a strong regulatory framework to protect people's right to privacy and ensure the security of their personal information, whether held in the public sector or the private sector. To this end, Labor introduced the first Commonwealth Privacy Act in 1988. Labor is committed to:
- progressing policy changes based on the recommendations of the Australian Law Reform Commission in its 2008 report on privacy

- improving privacy principles at the federal level governing both the public and private sectors
- introducing privacy reform legislation into Parliament in stages —dealing with new uniform privacy principles, credit information, health information, the powers and functions of the Privacy Commissioner and other privacy laws relating to new technologies.

42 Labor will:

- work to educate Australians, particularly Australian youth, about the impact on privacy of new technologies
- develop appropriate frameworks for the protection of privacy in the workplace
- ensure that personal information of Australians transferred overseas is protected
- work with state and territory governments to achieve greater national uniformity in privacy laws.

Freedom of speech

43 All Australians enjoy the right to exercise their freedom of speech in a manner that respects the individual and collective rights enjoyed by other Australians and allows others to live free from violence, the fear of violence or the threat of violence. To protect freedom of speech further, Labor will:

- move to implement the Australian Law Reform Commission recommendations on sedition laws
- provide shield laws to protect confidential sources and recognise the public interest in giving the community appropriate access to information
- review secrecy laws and laws that criminalise disclosure of matters of public interest.

44 Labor recognises that homophobic harassment by the written or spoken word causes actual harm, not mere offence, to people with a history of suffering discrimination and prejudice, and particular harm to young same-sex attracted or gender-questioning people who do not yet have support networks in place to assist them in coming out, and considers such harmful harassment is an unacceptable abuse of the responsibilities that come with freedom of speech and must be subject to effective sanctions.

45 Labor supports uniform national defamation laws that provide a proper balance between freedom of expression, public debate and the protection of the reputation of others. Labor believes that adults should be entitled to read, hear and see what they wish in private and in public, subject to adequate protection against persons being exposed to unsolicited material offensive to them and preventing conduct exploiting, or detrimental to the rights of others, particularly women and children. Labor is concerned about the portrayal of violence and inappropriate content in all forms of media. Labor will ensure that appropriate controls that reflect community standards are in place to classify and protect all Australians, particularly children and young people.

46 Ministers, staff and all members of Parliament should follow clear standards relating to their behaviour, contact with lobbyists, receipt of any gifts, and disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest which may affect them carrying out their public duty. To build on recent reforms, Labor will:

- make government operations more transparent by releasing information about the costs of government advertising, the costs of Ministerial and Parliamentary travel and related matters
- ensure Parliamentary entitlements are efficiently used and properly monitored with a high degree of transparency.

A dynamic, effective and modern public sector

- 47 Labor believes that the Australian Public Service (APS) and the wider public sector have a crucial role to play in nation building. Public services should be properly funded to deliver quality public policy, foster innovation, achieve best practice and create quality jobs.
- 48 We believe the APS should be:
- professional and apolitical
 - strong, independent and well-resourced
 - committed to equality and social cohesion as well as economic efficiency
 - accountable for meeting high standards of service delivery
 - recruited from the brightest and best in the Australian community
 - allowed and encouraged to provide frank and fearless advice
 - a model employer in terms of consultation, internal communication, trade union engagement, and the conditions of employment and opportunities for advancement for its staff, including through continuous education and lifelong learning
 - subject to democratic oversight through parliament and relevant bodies including the Auditor-General, the Australian National Audit Office, the Commonwealth Ombudsman and the Australian Public Service Commission
 - subject to independent administrative review of its actions
 - a leader in environmental best practice.
- 49 Labor has always been a strong advocate and protector of the professionalism and integrity of the public service. We will work with the public service and unions to ensure the public service is efficient, effective and responsive to the changing requirements of the Australian people.
- 50 Labor recognises that:
- Australians want a career public service without partisanship
 - public service employment must be fair and equitable
 - there is necessarily a limit on, and need for public scrutiny of, top public service remuneration
 - there must be an ethos of public service
 - outcomes are funded by public money.
- 51 Labor will ensure that these special elements are reflected in public service industrial relations arrangements by:
- supporting a single, unified APS by addressing current pay inequities through an agreed mechanism to achieve equal pay for work of equal value across the APS
 - ensuring service-wide productivities are recognised as efficiency gains by APS agencies and that these gains are shared between government, employees and the community
 - ensuring best practice bargaining arrangements including genuine negotiation over pay and conditions
 - ensuring genuine, good faith consultation on all matters affecting employees in the workplace
 - facilitating support for the role of trade unions and delegates in the workplace
 - ensuring secure, comprehensive, service-wide standards and classifications

- ensuring secure superannuation arrangements in industrial instruments. Labor will maintain at least 15.4 per cent employer contribution to the superannuation of Commonwealth Government employees, regardless of choice of fund.
- emphasising training and career development
- enabling public servants to balance work and family responsibilities
- ensuring appeal and review rights
- encouraging direct employment and limiting hiring on a contract basis
- enabling employment mobility across the whole of the public service
- providing adequate agency funding across the whole of the APS
- centrally and fully funding measures that address pay inequities in low-paying public sector agencies with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- taking further active steps to increase the proportion of Indigenous employees in the APS including the provision of meaningful career development and regularly reviewing the effectiveness of those measures in achieving that goal
- taking further active steps to increase the proportion of people with a disability employed in the APS and ensuring they have access to meaningful career development and regularly reviewing the effectiveness of those measures in achieving that goal
- ensuring that contracting-out is not used as a vehicle to cut wages and working conditions for public sector employees
- establishing staffing levels commensurate with workloads.

52 Labor will work with trade unions and employees to investigate a range of alternatives for measuring agency efficiency and identify alternative measures to the efficiency dividend that allow APS agencies to most efficiently and effectively deliver government services and develop public policy.

53 Labor will build on the measures it has taken in office by:

- introducing merit-based selection procedures to the appointment of agency heads—other than departmental secretaries—and statutory offices working within or closely with APS agencies
- continuing to support and fund special programs aimed at increasing the proportion of Indigenous employees in the APS
- attaching renewed priority to the employment of people with disabilities in the APS
- establishing an Ethics Advisory Service in the APSC.

Vibrant community and not-for-profit sectors

54 Labor believes a strong, vibrant, independent and innovative not-for-profit sector is essential to underpin a productive and inclusive Australia. Not-for-profit organisations contribute to good public policy, enrich our culture, protect our environment and promote health and wellbeing as well as advocate on behalf of Australian communities including marginalised groups. The work of not-for-profit organisations complements the role of the public sector in the provision of essential services to the community; it should not duplicate or compete with them. Labor has developed a National Compact: Working Together that outlines how the government and sector organisations will work together in new ways based on partnership and respect. It is the culmination of extensive consultation between the government and the sector.

- 55 The National Compact sets out a shared vision between the government and the not-for-profit sector where each will work together to improve social, cultural, civic, economic and environmental outcomes, building on the strengths of individuals and communities. This collaboration will contribute to improved community wellbeing and a more inclusive Australian society with better quality of life for all.
- 56 The Labor Government and the not-for-profit sector will work together according to these principles to achieve their shared vision:
- we believe a strong independent sector is a vital element in the achievement of a fair and inclusive society. We acknowledge and value the immense contribution the sector and its volunteers make to Australian life
 - we aspire to a relationship between the government and the sector based on mutual respect and trust
 - we agree that authentic consultation, constructive advocacy and genuine collaboration between the sector and the government will lead to better policies, programs and services for our communities
 - we believe the great diversity within Australia's not-for-profit sector is a significant strength, enabling it to understand and respond to the needs and aspirations of the nation's varied communities, in collaboration with those communities.
- 57 In addition to developing the National Compact, Labor has also established the Not-for-Profit Sector Reform Council. These will enhance the understanding of the value of the sector's work and drive improvements in regulation, administration and funding arrangements for the sector.
- 58 The national regulatory framework for not-for-profit organisations should be developed so that it:
- stimulates the establishment and further development of a broad range of community or not-for-profit organisations
 - does not attempt to inhibit the public advocacy role of the sector
 - encourages donor confidence
 - sets a reasonable standard for public disclosure
 - establishes appropriate oversight of the sector.
- 59 Labor supports the development of a national regulatory framework based on the 2008 report of the Senate Standing Committee on Economics Disclosure regimes for charities and not-for-profit organisations, and supports the examination of:
- a single national Associations Act providing for the registration and regulation of not-for-profit organisations, including all current non-profit companies and incorporated associations, by a referral of powers from the states through COAG
 - a tiered system for regulation based on revenue
 - a single national Fundraising Act to regulate fundraising by not-for-profit organisations
 - a specialist national regulatory body for not-for-profits
 - an accounting standard for not-for-profits, with appropriate recognition for small, non-complex organisations
 - codification of the law relating to the taxation of charities and not-for-profits, based on the June 2001 report of the Inquiry into the Definition of Charities and Related Organisations.

Delivering quality community services

- 60 Labor recognises that government relies on the non-government and community sector to help build an inclusive society. Labor believes that a highly-skilled and well-educated workforce is central to the delivery of quality services by the non-government community sector.

- 61 Labor believes government has a core responsibility for developing partnerships with the community sector to build an inclusive society. In procuring social and human capital Labor will ensure the real value of funding is maintained to ensure the attraction of a highly skilled and well educated workforce. Labor recognises that the social value and unique contribution of the community sector must be taken into account and that many competitive tendering models which take into account price alone do not deliver on broader social policy objectives.
- 62 Labor recognises the need for competitive wages in the community sector to overcome problems in retaining skilled workers in the industry, recognising the value of the work performed and ensuring the sector can provide the quality of service expected by the community.
- 63 Labor will support the establishment of career structures and pay scales that enhance service delivery, skills development and education opportunities for the community sector workforce.

Government procurement

- 64 Labor will promote a procurement strategy that safeguards skills and jobs, under existing international obligations, to ensure that Australian businesses can compete locally and internationally.
- 65 Labor will take into account a range of considerations when determining what constitutes good value for money, not just purchase price. Government agencies will not be forced to choose the cheapest supplier when that choice would cost taxpayers more in the long run because the products or services on offer are inferior in quality or have high ongoing costs. Agencies will also not be forced to choose the cheapest supplier when this would have detrimental social or environmental effects. Agencies will be required to consider all direct and indirect benefits and costs over the whole life of each product and service, along with the performance history of each prospective supplier (including, industrial relations, environmental and, where appropriate, community engagement).
- 66 Labor recognises the importance of both value for money and compliance with the government policy and Fair Work Act in procurement processes. This is why the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines require that suppliers comply with workplace relations laws.
- 67 Labor has established the Fair Work Principles which ensure that procurement decisions are consistent with the Fair Work Act. It is a requirement that suppliers and their contractors comply with the Fair Work Principles. Commencing with industries or sectors where there is a risk of non-compliance with the Fair Work Principles (which set out best practice workplace relations and Occupational Health and Safety standards), Labor will use existing procurement mechanisms such as multi-user lists and coordinated procurement, or if necessary introduce a pre-qualification system, to require prospective tenderers to demonstrate their compliance as a condition of the ability to tender. The recent amendments to the FMA Regulations to allow the issuing of the Commonwealth Cleaning Services Guidelines is an example of the government acting where there is demonstrated non-compliance with the Fair Work Principles in particular sectors. To ensure compliance, this process will be transparent, and be subject to oversight by a tripartite body where appropriate. The existing Productivity Consultative Committee which includes representatives of unions, business and the government will advise on areas of concern.
- 68 Recognising that direct government procurement represents only a proportion of the money the Australian government expends each year, Labor is also examining how procurement policies (including those that promote good workplace relations outcomes and Australian industry participation) can be extended to other areas of expenditure including grants and other funding. Labor will investigate ratifying ILO Convention 94, on the payment of market wages in government procurement, as an additional measure.

- 69 Labor is committed to:
- ensuring that government procurement delivers world-class public services, through fair and open procurement processes free of corruption and discrimination
 - ensuring that a robust objective public interest test occurs if services are shifted from the public sector and that it is not done for the purpose of lowering wages and conditions. The test must take into account social and environmental outcomes, including access to and quality of services, impact on regional areas and on local jobs, privacy provisions, risks and consequences, and the cost and benefits to the public
 - providing leadership on sustainability and ethical procurement practices.
- 70 Labor recognises that:
- in its role as a major purchaser of goods and services, government has a crucial role to play in fostering Australia's manufacturing, service and information industries, particularly for emerging industries or companies
 - for goods or services to be ethically sourced, suppliers must be good corporate citizens who comply with the law in all matters, most notably laws regarding taxation, trade practices, corporations, industrial relations, consumer affairs, environment and immigration
 - in obtaining and retaining information about citizens of a private nature including health, employment and financial data, government will maintain and protect such information and do so in a manner that promotes Australia's service and information industries.
- 71 Labor will continue to require that:
- Commonwealth procurement guidelines and codes reflect government policy on ethical procurement
 - principal suppliers to the Commonwealth comply with procurement policies by requiring all sub-contractors involved in the principal's supply chain to the Commonwealth to comply with all materially relevant laws
 - agencies should not enter into contracts with suppliers who have had a judicial decision against them (not including decisions under appeal) relating to employee entitlements and have not paid the claim
 - agencies seek to confirm a tenderer has no such unsettled judgements by seeking a declaration on the matter from all tenderers.
- 72 To further enhance transparency, Labor is ensuring agencies keep records of, and make available on request, the details of any sub-contractor engaged by a contractor in respect of a Commonwealth contract for procurement.
- 73 Labor has acted to support Australian Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to participate in the government procurement market, including the manufacturing sector. There are special measures in place within the procurement framework to ensure SMEs (small and medium enterprises) have the opportunity to compete for government business. These include a current commitment to source at least 10 per cent of purchases by value from SMEs. The latest figures show that the SME share of government procurement exceeded the government's stated 10 per cent commitment. As part of our commitment to supporting manufacturing in challenging economic conditions, Labor will identify measures to increase the sourcing from SMEs across sectors. Labor will investigate the benefits of increasing the definition of the size for SMEs from 200 employees to 500 in line with the definition used in the United States, and whether the particular challenges facing the textiles, clothing and footwear industry merit an increased commitment and size definition for that sector. The implementation of this commitment will be progressed through the work of the Prime Minister's Manufacturing Taskforce. Labor will better coordinate Commonwealth procurement and where it is sensible to do so, consider options to utilise model terms and conditions to assist business and contractors.

- 74 Labor is committed to maximising opportunities for Australian companies to compete for business by establishing a Procurement Coordinator. The Procurement Coordinator will review and advise on practices across government; handle and review complaints; aggregate procurement information and submit an annual report to the government.
- 75 Labor is ensuring that SMEs (small and medium enterprises) are able to engage in fair competition for government business. Government officials undertaking procurement are required to ensure that procurement methods do not unfairly discriminate against SMEs.
- 76 The Labor Government requires written contracts for procurements by an agency from a small business to specify payment within 30 days. This applies to payments valued up to and including A\$5 million (GST inclusive). Labor has required all contracts up to a value of \$1 million (GST inclusive) with small businesses to include the right to charge interest for late payments.
- 77 Labor is increasing the transparency of government contracts by limiting the use of commercial-in-confidence exclusions in public documents. All government agencies are required to maintain a register of commercial-in-confidence exclusions, to be periodically tabled in Parliament and subject to scrutiny by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit.
- 78 Building on recent reforms to Commonwealth procurement policy including the Indigenous Opportunities Policy and exemption to the mandatory procurement guidelines for Indigenous small to medium enterprises, the Labor Party will continue to use procurement to support the growth of the Indigenous business sector and will urge states and territories to implement similar reforms to their procurement policies.

Australian media

- 79 The media, particularly broadcasting, are undergoing a process of major change, driven by digitisation, convergence of technology and the globalisation of broadcasting, communications and information technologies.
- 80 Labor is committed to ensuring that Australia has both the regulatory processes and industry structures to support a strong, healthy, responsible and independent media that operates in the public interest.
- 81 Labor supports the National Classification Code that classifies content against the standards of morality, decency and propriety accepted by reasonable adults, without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. The principles of classification should apply on a platform neutral basis. Labor recognises the necessity of an independent and accountable review process for the list of URLs to be blocked by mandatory filtering. Labor believes mandatory ISP level filtering should be limited to Refused Classification content according to the National Classification Code. Labor does not support the introduction of mandatory ISP filtering that would lead to significant degradation of network speeds.
- 82 Labor will pursue policies that ensure that Australians have access to a diverse range of information and opinion in Australia's media. Labor is committed to maintaining appropriate Australian content quotas in the broadcasting sector. Labor will ensure that television and radio advertising are properly regulated and that community standards are reflected in the regulatory approach.
- 83 Labor will ensure that Australians will continue to enjoy coverage of premium sporting events on free-to-air television.

- 84 Labor is committed to ensuring that the Australian Communications and Media Authority is adequately resourced and has sufficient regulatory powers to ensure the maintenance of appropriate community standards in broadcasting material.
- 85 Labor is committed to ensuring local captioning in the broadcasting sector to ensure that all Australians are able to enjoy and access content on television.

Public broadcasting

- 86 The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) are two of Australia's most important public institutions. Labor acknowledges the unique operations of these broadcasting services and is committed to ensuring adequate funding and support for Australia's public broadcasters, to enable them to continue to provide Australians with high quality broadcasting services, free from political and commercial interference.
- 87 Labor recognises the importance of the ABC being maintained as an independent and comprehensive national public broadcaster, catering for a diversity of interests in the Australian community.
- 88 Labor recognises that the SBS provides a unique national broadcasting service that promotes a multicultural Australia, and provides services to Australians from non-English speaking backgrounds which are not delivered by the ABC or the commercial broadcasting sector.
- 89 Labor will:
- ensure public broadcasters cater to the needs of urban, regional and rural Australia, providing coverage of local news, current affairs and community activities
 - provide programs and services relevant to young Australians, including specialist children's programming available on digital channel ABC3
 - ensure the ABC produces high levels of distinctive local content
 - work with Indigenous people to provide services and programs relevant to them and their communities
 - provide comprehensive coverage of a broad range of sporting and artistic activities
 - ensure board members are appointed on the basis of merit
 - restore a staff-elected commissioner position on the ABC board, by passing the necessary legislation before the end of the current term of parliament
 - continue to invest in youth-accessible current affairs, and look to establish new services using new media
 - support and promote Australia's external broadcasters in radio, television and digital platforms, which encourage awareness of Australian values around the world and build closer ties in our region
 - that Australia's international broadcasting service should be recast as a converged service offering TV, radio and online programs, and become a permanent division within the ongoing operations of the ABC, Australia's national broadcaster.
- 90 Labor will also ensure that the ban on ABC advertising and sponsorship remains in place. Labor will also ensure that advertising is not permitted on ABC branded websites. Labor commits to no extension of the current advertising quotas on SBS to ensure that SBS remains a publicly funded broadcaster.
- 91 Labor will provide adequate funding on a triennial basis to the ABC and SBS to ensure they can deliver quality public broadcasting services. Labor will ensure that the national broadcasters are able to exploit the potential of new technology to deliver attractive and innovative content over digital television and the internet including regional broadband hubs on ABC websites.

Community broadcasting

- 92 Labor regards community broadcasting, which includes Indigenous, ethnic and multicultural broadcasting on radio and television, as an essential component of Australian broadcasting, and will continue to encourage its maintenance, growth and development.
- 93 Labor supports diversity in community and Indigenous broadcasting recognising that it meets the needs of many communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, ethnic and multicultural communities, and Australians with a print disability; and addresses developing Australian media needs with services for youth, mature age, LGBTI-focussed, religious, specialist music and other emerging communities of interest.
- 94 Labor will investigate the need for administrative arrangements to assist the training, support and regulatory compliance needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasters.
- 95 Labor believes adequate public funding must be provided to community and Indigenous radio and television for their effective ongoing operation. Labor seeks to improve the capacity of community and Indigenous stations to serve their communities by providing support to the sector for content production, improving skills, technical infrastructure, new digital broadcasting, and sector coordination and planning. Labor accepts that appropriate funding must be provided to the community and Indigenous broadcasting sector.
- 96 Labor acknowledges the importance of community broadcasting organisations in providing opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander produced content.
- 97 Labor remains committed to supporting an Indigenous, nation-wide free to air television channel through National Indigenous Television.

Keeping Australia Post public

- 98 Labor will:
- maintain Australia Post in full public ownership
 - maintain Australia Post as the sole carrier of the standard-size, letter service and the sole issuer of postage stamps. Cross-subsidy arrangements between metropolitan and regional Australia will remain to ensure an equitable, flat-rate postal charging arrangement for the standard letter
 - encourage the growth of Australia Post's services and ensure that Australia Post's community service obligations provide equitable access to a full range of postal services for all Australians
 - ensure that Australia Post continues to maintain appropriate coverage of post office and post box outlets throughout Australia. Labor will ensure that the present Australia Post corporate retail outlets remain publicly owned and operated and that the current ownership mix will be maintained
 - promote greater social responsibility by Australia Post towards its employees and the communities in which it operates, particularly those communities within regional Australia
 - encourage Australia Post to continue to use its network to provide public access to new communications options and essential community information. Labor envisages Australia Post playing a key role as a platform for the delivery of digital services, particularly to regional Australia
 - strongly encourage Australia Post toward direct full time employment of staff rather than on a contract basis, where possible, to limit the use of the "out-working" or "remote commencement and cessation"
 - endeavour to ensure that contractors will not be used to undermine the current entitlements of direct employees.

Chapter 11: Australia's place in a changing world

Introduction

- 1 Labor will ensure that Australia can hold its head high as a proud member of the international community.
- 2 We are a middle power with regional and global interests, the 13th largest economy in the world, a member of the G20 and a founding member of the United Nations. We are a significant player in our region and constructive actor globally.
- 3 Labor seeks to expand Australia's influence and standing, guided by its values to enhance economic outcomes and security of the Australian people.
- 4 Under Labor, Australia will work through international economic forums to create a more stable global financial system and international trading regime.

Labor values

- 5 Australian Labor does not believe that the notion of a fair go stops at our continental shelf. The same values that drive our actions at home should guide our actions abroad. Labor ensures that Australian efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation, address climate change and engage effectively to reduce poverty get measurable results.
- 6 Labor ensures Australia's interests are served by strengthening our alliance with the United States, deeply engaging with our region and providing active leadership in international forums. Labor works to find solutions to the challenges that the international community faces.
- 7 Labor believes we can build a more secure Australia by supporting our security, intelligence, law enforcement and emergency management agencies, as well as promoting an international environment that is stable, peaceful and prosperous.
- 8 Labor believes that observing human rights and civil liberties is central to the continued strength of our democracy. Labor will have regard to those rights when taking action to safe-guard the security of our country in order to ensure that those rights are not unnecessarily infringed. Labor will also monitor and review the implementation of laws relating to national security to ensure that human rights and civil liberties are not unnecessarily infringed.
- 9 Labor believes in building community resilience — whether in the face of natural disasters, violent extremism or economic uncertainty — is vital to our domestic and international security interests.
- 10 We do what we say. We do our fair share. And we will continue to shape an Australia engaged with the world that Australians can be proud of.

Labor achievements

Foreign affairs

We have:

- led the call for strong action to assist the people of Libya and protect them from attack by the Qaddafi regime
- launched the China 2.0 initiative, identifying the opportunities for Australia in China's economic development and programs to promote peace and friendship
- shaped a new regional architecture to strengthen Australia's security and prosperity and the security and prosperity of the east Asian peoples through the expansion of the East Asia Summit to include the US and Russia
- established, with Japan, the ten-nation Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative to make practical progress towards a nuclear free world
- played a prominent role in promoting human rights and development in Burma — Australia is the second largest donor to Burma
- appointed Australia's first Global Ambassador for Women and Girls to give added direction and focus to women's issues globally
- implemented passport reforms to make it easier for sex and gender diverse people to get a passport in their preferred gender
- made aid effectiveness the cornerstone of Australia's aid program
- responded quickly to the crisis in the Horn of Africa, providing over \$88 million through UN agencies and Australian NGOs. Australia is the third largest donor and has been recognised by key international stakeholders as a global leader in this response.

Defence

We have:

- ended a decade-long gap in strategic analysis and defence reform to create a smarter, stronger, and more adaptable Defence organisation that can defend Australia, our people, and our interests, in today's rapidly evolving world
- released — in May 2009 — the most comprehensive Defence White Paper ever produced by an Australian Government
- continued to improve the capability of the ADF through a comprehensive equipment modernisation program
- continued to upgrade or replace up to 85 per cent of ADF equipment — increasing defence capability and creating thousands of skilled Australian jobs
- approved around \$8 billion in investment in major Defence equipment. Since September 2010, the government has approved almost \$5 billion more of new projects, including new naval combat helicopters, 100 extra Bushmaster vehicles, a fifth C-17 heavy lift aircraft and a new amphibious vessel to ensure the ADF can continue to respond to operations including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief at home and abroad
- ensured that, under Labor, Australian industry currently provides about \$5.5 billion in defence industry work every year, increasing to about \$7.5 billion over the next ten years. This means more jobs, on top of the nearly 30,000 workers already employed in Australian Defence Industries
- worked to build defence industry skills — Labor is strengthening Australian Industry Capability Plans to increase opportunities for local suppliers; supporting the Skilling Australia's Defence Industry program that has already funded more than 24,000 training places including 2200 apprentices in defence industry and manufacturing; and setting up the Defence Engineering Internship Program — encouraging engineering students to work in the Australian Defence Industry

- implemented a range of reforms — relating to Defence procurement, budget and accountability — to improve accountability in Defence, to enhance efficient delivery of value for money equipment when it is needed and ensure better Budget and financial arrangements in Defence
- withdrawn Australian combat forces from Iraq in July 2009. From 2003, approximately 20,000 ADF personnel served in Iraq with professionalism and dedication
- remained — together with 48 other countries — committed to playing our part in the UN-mandated mission in Afghanistan to transition responsibility to Afghan authorities by 2014
- enhanced transparency in relation to our operations in Afghanistan, with regular Prime Ministerial and Ministerial reports to Parliament including on detainee management
- committed \$1.6 billion for additional force protection measures for our troops in Afghanistan, including new combat body armour, upgraded vehicles and enhanced mine and IED detection equipment
- significantly upgraded our cyber security capabilities in Defence, with the opening of the Cyber Security Operations Centre in the Defence Signals Directorate. A recently commissioned Cyber White Paper to help ensure Australians can connect to the internet with confidence. Cyber security has been added to our ANZUS Alliance commitments
- continued to support wounded soldiers, introducing the Simpson program, a new program of enhanced services and support for wounded ADF members
- commissioned the first review in several decades into whether the ADF is correctly geographically positioned to meet Australia's modern and future strategic and security challenges
- formally agreed to the removal of gender restrictions from ADF combat roles. Women will now be able to work in any position in the ADF, including combat roles, provided they have the ability to meet all of the demands of the role
- commemorated the sacrifice and commitment of our veterans: including a \$8m additional annual funding to the Australian War Memorial, \$3.3m for the Vietnam Veteran Education Centre in Washington and a new program to maintain all graves of Victoria Cross, its equivalent civil award, the Cross of Valour, and the predecessor of the Cross of Valour, the George Cross recipients.
- implemented a \$30 million Pharmaceutical Reimbursement Scheme for veterans with qualifying service and accepted disabilities and a \$152.7 million Coordinated Veterans' Care Program providing care to eligible Gold Card holders who have chronic conditions, complex care needs and are at risk of an unplanned hospitalisation
- introduced fairer indexation for all veterans' compensation and war widows' pensions and implemented a new \$20 million Prisoner of War Recognition payment.

National security

We have:

- implemented legislation to enhance cooperation, assistance and information sharing between security, intelligence and law enforcement agencies
- established the Counter-Terrorism Control Centre in ASIO to strengthen the coordination of Australia's counter-terrorism intelligence efforts
- passed anti-people smuggling legislation to strengthen our border protection regime, including enabling ASIO to carry out its intelligence functions in relation to people smuggling and other serious border security threats
- confronted the growing cyber threat by establishing the Cyber Security Operations Centre, CERT Australia and a dedicated Cyber Investigations Unit within ASIO to address cyber security threats
- invested nearly \$10 million to implement programs and strategies to enhance social cohesion and resilience in order to lessen the appeal of extremist ideologies that fuel terrorism
- shown leadership on national disaster management by establishing the National Crisis Coordination Centre to drive Commonwealth involvement in national crises and investing over \$26 million to set up Australia's national telephone-based emergency warning system, Emergency Alert.

Labor priorities

- 11 Labor has built a Foreign Affairs and National Security policy that:
 - advances our national security and integrity as a sovereign nation
 - protects Australians and Australia's economic interests abroad
 - contributes to a stable and just international order
 - places the highest priority on assisting Australians abroad
 - encompasses both man-made and natural threats or 'all-hazards'
 - balances strong security measures with the protection of individual rights and freedoms.
- 12 Labor achieves this through:
 - our alliance with the US
 - comprehensive engagement with Asia
 - our engagement with key global and regional institutions, including the UN, the G20 and the East Asian Summit
 - strengthening Australia's partnerships with key global and regional players
 - contributing our fair share to the global fight against poverty
 - domestic national security strategies.

Maintaining our national security

- 13 The most fundamental obligation of government is to protect the nation's territorial integrity and the security of its people.
- 14 Australia's region faces real security challenges. Changing power realities are challenging traditional security settings. Unresolved territorial disputes give rise to potential flashpoints in the region. And growing military capability in Asia is increasing the potential cost of regional disputes.
- 15 Recent unprecedented natural disasters across Australia and in our region have also starkly illustrated the potential impact of climate change on our communities.
- 16 Labor's 'all-hazards' approach to national security recognises that the safety and security of Australians and our economic and social wellbeing is more than just addressing the threat of war and terrorism — it also encompasses natural disaster management, strong borders and combating serious and organised crime.
- 17 With Australian families, businesses and government conducting more and more activities online, cybercrime has already overtaken the drug trade as the most profitable form of crime in the world. Addressing this requires modern domestic laws and a consistent international framework that deals with the global nature of cybercrime by supporting cooperation between jurisdictions. Labor will accede to the world's leading cybercrime convention, developed by the Council of Europe. Accession will update Australia's domestic legislation and will enable enhanced cooperation with our allies on cyber issues.
- 18 Labor's response to the security challenges in our region is multifaceted. Labor strongly supports the US Alliance and continued US military engagement in the region, which has provided the bedrock of regional stability for decades.
- 19 Labor also supports security in the region by fostering strong ties with our Asian neighbours. Labor sees our partnerships in Asia as vital tools for encouraging stability in the region.

- 20 Labor works to strengthen regional institutions so that they can deal with the evolving realities of the region. The expansion of the EAS to include the US and Russia ensures that all of the key players can meet at summit level to discuss the range of challenges facing the region. A result of Australian diplomacy, the expansion of the EAS delivers the key features of an Asia-Pacific community. Labor also seeks to use traditional institutions including the Commonwealth to address the global challenges of the future.
- 21 Labor's long history of creative diplomacy has demonstrated that, with the right leadership, Australia can play a real role in settling regional disputes. Labor administrations played key roles in the implementation of the Cambodian peace plan and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. Labor continues in the tradition of active diplomacy to strengthen regional security.
- 22 Labor is equally committed to tackling global security challenges posed by terrorism and the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.
- 23 Labor supports Australia's engagement with partners to prevent Afghanistan from ever becoming a safe haven for terrorists again. This requires both a military commitment and an effort to ensure that Afghans see real improvements in their livelihoods.
- 24 Labor also supports Australia's engagement with Indonesia and other regional states on counter-terrorism. Labor believes that an effective strategy for combating terrorism involves promoting justice, genuine peace and development, as well as confronting those factors that make it easier for terrorist organisations to recruit within the region. Access to education is a key factor in making communities resistant to terrorist organisations.
- 25 Labor has renewed Australia's efforts towards ridding the world of nuclear weapons.
- 26 Labor welcomed the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and the important contribution made by the Commission's report in informing debate and outcomes of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Labor also supports the ten-nation Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative set up by Australia and Japan to advance these outcomes in practical ways.
- 27 Labor will actively encourage the pursuit of further substantial reductions of nuclear arsenals and the development of processes, including examining the need for a nuclear weapons convention, for bringing all nuclear armed states into the disarmament process.
- 28 Labor is also committed to strengthening the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency and compliance with the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (including universalisation of the Additional Protocol), and other nuclear treaties and agreements. Labor's nuclear disarmament agenda also includes support for "no first use" obligations, deep, verifiable, and irreversible cuts in all categories of nuclear weapons and a continuing reduction of their roles in national security policies.
- 29 Labor affirms its unequivocal commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons. Labor will continue its support for nuclear weapon free zones.

Protecting Australia's economic interests abroad

- 30 Labor understands that contemporary security challenges involve multi-agency and organisation responses and coordination. Labor will, therefore, continue to develop and enhance the world leading multi-agency Civil-Military cooperation capability established by the Labor government. This will include streamlining key agency input and administration such as examining the relationship between the Civil-Military Centre, the ADF Peace Operations Training Centre and the Australian Civilian Corps.

- 31 Labor will ensure Australian foreign policy is deeply engaged with the Australian business community and the task of winning a stronger economic future for Australia.
- 32 Labor will continue to drive initiatives like Australia–China 2.0 so that government remains on the cutting edge of innovation that supports Australian business to win new markets and strengthen existing partnerships.
- 33 Labor also knows it is the government's responsibility to influence international decision-makers as Australia manages the ongoing turbulence in the global economy. Labor is committed to deep engagement with the region and strengthened regional institutions that advance Australia's security and economic interests.
- 34 Labor believes the G20 represents the best combination of global legitimacy and global effectiveness to deal with these challenges. Labor believes Australia, along with all governments of the G20, has a collective interest in sustaining the legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness of the G20 into the future.
- 35 Labor knows Australia's economic engagement spans the globe. But our trading interests are closest with the Asia–Pacific region. Over 70 per cent of our trade is with the member economies of APEC. Our top three merchandise export markets are Japan, China and the Republic of Korea. India is our fastest growing major export market. Our two-way trade with Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore is worth over \$40 billion.
- 36 Labor believes it is crucial that the Asia–Pacific region remains open to trade and investment. Australia needs open, inclusive regional institutions. And we need to ensure that bilateral and regional free trade agreements support the rules-based trade system of the WTO. The region's economic importance to the world continues to grow.

A stable and just international order

- 37 As a middle power, located in a rapidly developing region and distant from traditional sources of global power, Australia has much to gain from a global rules-based order. We benefit from an international system that is fair, just and based on law.
- 38 Labor seeks to maintain and enhance this international order through support for democracy, human rights, development and international law. In a world of mutual obligation, we cannot expect the international system to protect our interests if Australia does not do its own fair share to support the global order.

Democracy

- 39 Labor supports democracy globally and is committed to reducing the global democratic deficit. The universal aspiration of people to have the government of their choice has been underlined by the developments of the Arab spring.
- 40 Labor supports the rights of all peoples to have a legitimate voice in their government.
- 41 Labor supports the process of democratic transition including through electoral assistance and other programs to assist countries to build their democratic capacity.
- 42 Labor believes that a free press is an essential part of a democratic society and is committed to promoting media freedoms globally and the protection of the rights of journalists.

Human rights

- 43 Labor believes the promotion and protection of human rights at home and abroad is vital to achieve a peaceful and secure world where people can live in freedom and dignity. Labor considers the promotion of universal human rights to be a core foreign policy objective and that our diplomatic and economic goals must be consistent with that objective.
- 44 Labor believes all states have a duty to protect and promote universal human rights. Labor believes that domestic peace and stability, which stem from respect for human rights, contributes to international security. Effective human rights diplomacy supports international and regional security and is in Australia's national interest.
- 45 Under Labor, Australia is forthright in raising concerns over human rights violations abroad, including through bilateral representations and formal bilateral human rights dialogues with China, Vietnam and Laos. Labor notes the detention of peaceful dissidents is a significant impediment to the realisation of human rights and will be a focus of such representations and dialogues.
- 46 Labor is gravely concerned about the continuing human rights abuses in North Korea. The North Korean regime is one of the most repressive in the world with a horrific record of human rights abuses. Regrettably, there is little room for optimism that the humanitarian and human rights situation in North Korea will improve in the near future.
- 47 Labor deplores the continued denial of democratic process in Burma and the well-documented human rights abuses that have caused so many citizens to leave Burma. Labor strongly supports efforts by the United Nations for a political solution in Burma that will end years of suffering, denial and decline.
- 48 Beyond the Asia-Pacific region, Labor is concerned about human rights violations wherever they occur and will continue to raise human rights concerns with the governments concerned. In particular, Labor is very concerned about ongoing and systematic human rights abuses which continue to occur in Zimbabwe, the Sudan, Iran and Western Sahara.
- 49 Support for universal human rights and democratic processes will continue to be an integral part of Australia's engagement with Indonesia. In the context of a broadly based and multifaceted relationship, Australia will maintain contact with all elements of the political process in Indonesia and our dialogue will give expression to the Australian people's fundamental concern with human rights and democratic freedoms. Labor strongly supports the full implementation of the Special Autonomy Act of 2001 for West Papua.
- 50 Labor is strongly committed to promoting universal adherence to and implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other key human rights instruments. Labor considers that human rights do not exist in a hierarchy and will strive to ensure that all human rights instruments ratified by Australia are observed in domestic law.
- 51 Under Labor, Australia is an active partner in support of UN efforts to promote and protect human rights, and in the development of robust and independent national human rights institutions across the world. Labor will be forthright in raising concerns over human rights violations with relevant governments and organisations in our region and beyond.
- 52 Labor is determined to further strengthen international mechanisms and processes for monitoring human rights violations and to encourage the development of regional dialogue on human rights issues in the Asia-Pacific region.

- 53 Under Labor, Australia will support the Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, and will continue to sponsor and promote resolutions in support of the implementation of human rights protections for lesbians and gay men and bisexual and transgender and intersex people at the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations. Australia under Labor will actively encourage the repeal of anti-gay laws, especially criminal laws against homosexual sexual conduct, and most urgently against such laws where they impose the death penalty, and generally to encourage steps to implement the actions required by the Yogyakarta Principles. Labor in government will continue to work strategically to support international civil society organisations promoting LGBTI human rights.
- 54 Where appropriate, Labor recognises that the imposition of targeted sanctions against governments that violate human rights may be required. Such sanctions will not be to the detriment of the general population of the country in respect of which sanctions are imposed.
- 55 Labor supports the development of initiatives to advance the rights of Indigenous peoples internationally and address Indigenous disadvantage, including through its support for the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 56 Labor is also committed to sharing Australia's own experiences of reconciliation, including the National Apology, and strongly supports efforts to increase Indigenous participation in UN fora, including through contributions to the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations.
- 57 Labor believes in gender equality and the empowerment of women. Under Labor, Australia has appointed its first Global Ambassador for Women and Girls to give added direction and focus to women's issues globally.
- 58 Labor abhors the increasing levels of repression against women in some countries. Labor will vigorously support international campaigns to end:
- sexual exploitation of women and children, including sex tourism and trafficking
 - prohibitions on education and paid employment and restriction to access to medical services for women
 - the denial of equal property rights for women
 - the unequal standing of women in judicial and political systems
 - the persecution of rape victims
 - the systematic use of rape and sexual torture in war.
- 59 Labor will work to extend the White Ribbon Day campaign to Australia's Pacific neighbours to further our efforts to stop violence against women.
- 60 Labor is strongly opposed to the incidence of forced labour and is committed to actively campaigning against forced labour and for the rights of people in situations of forced labour through international forums, multilateral and bilateral frameworks and its relationships with other countries. Labor also commits to providing every possible support and assistance for people in situations of forced labour both in Australia and internationally.
- 61 Labor will appoint a Global Ambassador for People Trafficking Issues to give greater coordination and focus to Australia's efforts to take action against people trafficking.
- 62 Labor is committed to promoting and protecting the rights of persons living with disability, including by Australia's adherence to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Labor is strengthening opportunities for people with disability in the Asia-Pacific region and globally through its support for a disability-inclusive aid program.

- 63 Labor is universally opposed to capital punishment. Under Labor, Australia will strongly and clearly state its opposition to the death penalty, whenever and wherever it arises and advocate its universal abolition, including through global representations.
- 64 Labor will actively campaign to focus world attention on governments that persist with forms of repression against the development of free trade unionism. Labor reaffirms that issues of core labour standards relate to fundamental human rights and will pursue, as appropriate, through international treaties, guaranteed respect for those rights. Labor reaffirms its support for programs designed to address abuse of labour rights in the Asia-Pacific region through support to neighbouring countries for the development of national labour legislation, helping partner countries to ratify ILO conventions, and regional trade union cooperation. Labor will restore and strengthen Australia's participation and support for these vital activities. Labor will also give high priority to supporting international efforts to eradicate the exploitation of child labour.
- 65 Under Labor, Australia is playing an active role in encouraging Australian companies operating overseas to observe international human rights standards, including core labour standards, and to ensure that their operations do not directly or indirectly violate human rights or inflict unacceptable impacts on local communities and the environment.
- 66 Labor will actively campaign to focus world attention on governments that persist with forms of repression against the development of free trade unionism.
- 67 Labor will work with Australian trade unions to build the capacity of trade unions in developing countries through a development assistance and training package, to complement Australia's foreign policy and official development assistance goals.
- 68 Labor recognises the impact of asbestos on the health of those who are exposed to it and the legacy that it will leave, particularly on vulnerable people in the developing world where asbestos is still used. Labor will lead international calls for a global treaty to ban the use of and trade in asbestos and will lead diplomatic efforts on this front including convening a Global Alliance against the Asbestos Hazard Conference in Australia.
- 69 Labor will ensure that Certificates of No Impediment to Marriage are issued regardless of sex or gender of either member of the couple.

International law

- 70 Labor believes that reform of the United Nations and the United Nations Security Council is essential to ensure that the UN can effectively respond to international challenges.
- 71 Labor believes a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council is firmly in Australia's national interest. A seat on the UN Security Council will enable Australia to exercise influence on decisions that affect the safety of our troops and peacekeepers abroad, including in Afghanistan and Timor Leste. It will enable Australia to influence action on threats to our international security, including against proliferators such as Iran and North Korea, and enable Australia to contribute more effectively to action against international terrorism.
- 72 Labor supports strengthening the UN's capacity in the fields of preventive diplomacy and peace building, peacemaking, peace keeping and peace enforcement in recognition of the significant threats to international security that arise both from longstanding and new conflicts between and within states. Therefore Labor strongly supports the UN Security Council's adoption of the doctrine of international humanitarian intervention known as 'The Responsibility to Protect'.

Strengthening our engagement with the countries of the world

- 73 Labor supports the work and role of the International Criminal Court as a key part of Australia's ongoing commitment to international criminal justice.
- 74 Labor is committed to strengthening Australia's ties with the countries of the world. As a nation with a large immigrant population, global interests, and cultural ties to every corner of the globe, we have much to gain from building our bilateral relationships.
- 75 The US remains our closest security ally and a vital global partner. Labor is firmly committed to maintaining and strengthening Australia's close relationship with the US, a relationship founded on our people's common democratic values and their commitment to fostering international peace and security.
- 76 Labor believes in the centrality of the alliance to Australia's national security requirements in critical areas such as intelligence on terrorism, defence equipment and broader strategic stabilisation in East Asia.
- 77 Labor believes that the ANZUS Treaty, which is central to the alliance relationship, is one of Australia's great national assets.
- 78 Labor continues to build on this excellent relationship and work with the US to address new and emerging challenges.
- 79 Labor will continue to promote joint defence exercises and improved interoperability with US military forces, within the context of Australia's national defence objectives.
- 80 Built on a foundation of mutual respect and a sense of genuine partnership, Labor seeks to build stronger ties in the region.
- 81 Labor strongly supports enhancing people-to-people contacts between Australia and our East Asian neighbours and will actively pursue the further development of social, cultural and educational ties.
- 82 Labor will place new emphasis on ensuring that the languages of the region are taught more widely in our schools.
- 83 Labor welcomes China's economic growth, and will work to encourage China's emergence as a major, constructive influence on regional and global affairs. Labor is ensuring that as China grows, Australia is positioned to benefit from this growth while preserving our core national interests. Labor is optimistic about the Australia–China economic relationship and will ensure Australia takes advantage of the increasing openness and centres of growth in China.
- 84 The China relationship is important in its own right, we do not believe it is a question of either/or with other Asian partners and the US. A prosperous China, fully engaged in the region's affairs is good for Australia and good for the region.
- 85 Labor will further strengthen engagement with Japan, Australia's closest partner in Asia.
- 86 Labor has elevated, and will continue to strengthen, Australia's political and security relationship with Korea, our third largest trading partner, including through a security agreement that is Korea's first aside from its alliance with the US.
- 87 Labor welcomes India's emergence as a major player in regional and global affairs. We will work to continue to intensify the bilateral relationship with India through more high-level contacts, new forms of regional and bilateral cooperation and expanded commercial links, building on the Strategic Partnership signed in November 2009.

- 88 Labor commends Indonesia's emergence as a vibrant democracy, and will intensify engagement with the government of President Yudhoyono in Indonesia.
- 89 Labor will continue to build closer partnerships with all ASEAN countries.
- 90 Labor believes that Australia needs to continue to take a leading role in promoting development, security and stability in the Pacific. Labor's Pacific Partnerships for Development has 11 Pacific Island Government partners, working together to have a real and positive impact on the lives of ordinary people in the Pacific.
- 91 As the region's largest bilateral donor, Labor has maintained Australia's commitment to the region through an effective aid program underpinned by accountable development strategies.
- 92 In the Pacific, Labor, in collaboration with our Pacific partners, will:
- promote sustainable and equitable development
 - strengthen regional cooperation in areas including Defence and security, climate change, natural disaster planning, response and relief, sustainable agriculture, education, fisheries research and protection
 - work to ensure that impacts on the peoples and nations of the Pacific are fully considered in the negotiation of solutions to global problems and their interests are represented internationally.
- 93 Labor supports the development of a strong political, economic and cultural partnership with the European Union and the countries of Europe.
- 94 Labor will continue to look for ways to enhance our cooperation and policy approaches with the UK and acknowledges the unique nature of the relationship, given its breadth, depth and long history.
- 95 Labor will engage in both the challenges and opportunities of Africa by working with both its individual nation states and important regional institutions including the African Union and the Southern African Development Community.
- 96 Labor also supports expanding cooperation with the countries and organisations of the Middle East and North Africa in pursuit of Australian consular, commercial, security and broader strategic objectives. Labor values the strong and growing people-to-people and commercial links that underpin this cooperation, and recognises the important role that the region plays in determining global responses to global problems. Labor believes the previous Australian Government underestimated the importance of this region not only to Australia's national interests but also to regional political and economic stability.
- 97 Labor is investing in building long-term bilateral relationships with key Middle Eastern countries and important organisations such as the Arab League, and the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf.
- 98 Labor believes that the Muslim world is important to Australia. Because of the connection with so many Australians of Islamic faith; because so many of Australia's key neighbours and partners are Muslim nations; and because the challenges that face the world require shared solutions, Labor is strengthening Australia's links with the Muslim world, including through the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.
- 99 Labor is committed to supporting an enduring and just two-state solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, based on the right of Israel to live in peace within secure borders internationally recognised and agreed by the parties, and reflecting the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to also live in peace and security within their own state.

- 100 Labor is deeply disturbed by the destabilising role of Iran in the Middle East and beyond, and by the lack of Iran's compliance with international measures aimed at its nuclear programs. Labor will coordinate closely with the UN and like-minded nations to take measures to increase pressure on Iran to comply with UN resolutions and to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons. Labor also calls on Iran to cease support for terrorism and desist from its calls for and efforts towards the destruction of Israel.
- 101 Labor supports expanded relations with the Americas, including Canada, the Caribbean, Central America and South America. Labor believes that Australia should build on growing people-to-people links between our countries to work together on shared issues including trade and climate change.

The fight to overcome poverty

- 102 The fight against global poverty is one of the greatest challenges of the 21st Century. Australia has a strategic, economic and moral stake in the battle against global poverty. It is a fundamental role of any modern society to advance the development of the poorest people, communities and nations and assist them in the transition from poverty to prosperity.
- 103 Labor believes the fundamental purpose of Australian aid is to help people overcome poverty and save lives. This also serves Australia's national interests by promoting stability and prosperity both in our region and beyond. We focus our effort in areas where Australia can make a difference and where our resources can most effectively and efficiently be deployed.
- 104 Labor believes fair go for all is part of our national character—and that fair go extends to the 1.4 billion members of the human family who still live in grinding poverty. The idea of giving everyone a fair go is ingrained in all Australians, and Australians are, by instinct, a compassionate people.
- 105 Labor wants enhanced effectiveness to be the cornerstone of Australia's aid program and for Australia to be world-leading in maximising aid effectiveness. Labor is committed to an efficient and effective program that drives value for money by delivering real and measurable results. Ultimately we aim to help create communities and countries where assistance is no longer needed.
- 106 Labor wants an aid program of which all Australians should be proud. A program which all Australians can have the opportunity to participate in and support through volunteering or through the work of non-government organisations.
- 107 Labor believes that the Millennium Development Goals, the global blueprint to end extreme poverty, should continue to guide Australia's international development assistance. Labor wants an aid program makes a real difference to those living in extreme poverty, working to:
- eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
 - achieve universal primary education
 - promote gender equality and empower women
 - reduce child mortality
 - improve maternal health and family planning
 - combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
 - ensure environmental sustainability
 - develop a global partnership for development.

- 108 Labor also acknowledges that progress towards these Millennium Development Goals can be wiped out where appropriate services are not available in emergency situations. Labor will ensure we are able to help countries in times of natural disasters by working in cooperation with international and domestic partners to improve disaster preparedness and develop emergency services.
- 109 Labor is committed to Australia taking a leadership role on the issue of international development assistance, committing to actively campaigning through international forums, multilateral and bilateral frameworks and its relationships with other countries to ensure, as far as possible, the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and internationally agreed aid and development assistance targets.
- 110 Labor is committed to increasing Overseas Development Assistance to 0.5 per cent of Gross National Income by 2015. This would bring Australia to the OECD average for the relative size of our aid program. Beyond 2015–16, as economic and fiscal conditions permit, Labor has an aspirational goal of raising aid to 0.7 per cent of GNI. This is a long-standing policy adopted by Australian governments since 1970.
- 111 Labor believes Australia's overseas aid efforts must advance human rights, including promoting access to basic rights to health, shelter, education, clean water, sanitation and emergency services support. As having an independent civil society in development partner countries is important for advancing human rights, a key plank Australia aid efforts will be to nurture and support it. Labor acknowledges the 2010 recognition by the UN General Assembly of the access to water and sanitation as a human right.
- 112 Labor believes all human beings have the right to live in dignity and with freedom from want and fear.
- 113 Labor will maintain the geographical focus of Australia's aid program on the Asia-Pacific region, including our nearest neighbours, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste.
- 114 Labor is also committed to strengthening our engagement in Africa, South Asia and Latin America where many of the development challenges are greatest.
- 115 Labor recognises that pro-poor economic growth is the most powerful tool to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. Economic growth helps to create jobs, lift household incomes and generates the government revenues needed to provide key public services such as hospitals and schools.
- 116 Labor recognises that by lifting people out of poverty, Australia is helping to grow the global economy and that is good for Australian business.
- 117 Labor believes that education is a key pathway out of poverty. The better educated nations will be the most resilient economies of the 21st century. Education also helps communities to combat radicalisation.
- 118 Labor believes the empowerment of women should be a fundamental principle of Australia's aid program. It is one of the most effective tools to increase the chances of education for all young women and girls, raise economic productivity, reduce infant and maternal mortality, and improve health including the prevention of HIV/AIDS.
- 119 Labor believes enabling more children, particularly girls, to attend school for a longer and better education, gives them the skills to build their own futures and, in time, escape poverty.

- 120 Labor is committed to saving the lives of poor women and children through greater access to quality maternal and child health services such as skilled birth attendants and midwives, as well as supporting large scale disease prevention, vaccination and treatment.
- 121 Labor has a strong commitment to ensuring food security, water and sanitation, climate change and disability are afforded appropriate attention as important development challenges.
- 122 Labor is committed to enhancing disaster preparedness and delivering faster, more effective responses to humanitarian crises, given the increased frequency and impact of natural disasters in recent decades. Labor will ensure that the Commonwealth promotes a national all-hazards approach to disaster resilience, addressing mitigation, response and recovery, and ensuring well-resources emergency services are maintained.
- 123 Labor remains committed to fostering good governance and accountability through the development assistance program, particularly in fragile states.
- 124 Labor is committed to delivering more of its overseas development assistance through non-government organisations and to finding new ways of working with NGOs and civil society to ensure the assistance is efficient and effective.
- 125 Labor will work actively with multilateral agencies to deliver assistance effectively and will work to strengthen and reform multilateral agencies and international financial institutions.

Assisting Australians abroad

- 126 Labor places the highest priority on the safety of Australians overseas and is committed to delivering a high standard of travel advice and consular assistance to all Australians overseas so that our millions of 'unofficial ambassadors' can travel the world in safety.
- 127 Labor supports efforts to allow consular representatives to visit Australians promptly after they have been arrested and to pass messages between them and their loved ones.
- 128 Labor is committed to ensuring Australian passports are at the forefront of passport technology, ensuring that people applying for and using passports are who they say they are.
- 129 Labor is committed to ensuring Australian passports comply with international standards and are accepted in all countries assisting smooth transit across international borders.

The challenge of terrorism

- 130 Labor led older generations of Australians in successfully defending Australia as a secure and democratic nation. The growing presence of terrorism in our region poses new and complex security challenges.
- 131 Labor will increase engagement in our region and cooperation with our neighbours—measures that are fundamental to meeting the new security challenges. Labor will ensure that our Defence Forces, Police and Emergency Services are equipped to meet the new challenges.
- 132 Labor's first priority is the Defence and security of our nation and its people. However, Labor refuses to manipulate fear or racism for political gain in response to terror. Australia needs tough laws to deal with terrorism but, just as importantly, we need well-balanced laws that target the terrorists, not innocent citizens. We need strong safeguards to protect the civil and human rights that are fundamental to our freedoms. Labor is committed to finalising the review of the Anti-Terrorism Legislation.

- 133 In the past, Australia has not had a properly integrated national security policy. Labor in Government has outlined new initiatives to enhance national security, including:
- the appointment of a National Security Adviser
 - the creation of a strategic policy framework for national security
 - a National Intelligence and Coordination Committee
 - improvements to Australia's national crisis management arrangements
 - the preparation of new Defence White Papers at intervals of no greater than five years.
- 134 Labor believes that an effective strategy for combating terrorism must promote justice, the rule of law, genuine peace and inclusive development, as well as confront those factors that make it easier for terrorist organisations to recruit within the region. Australia's military/ security assistance should promote these objectives. The strategy should include addressing the economic, employment and educational opportunities available to young people across the region. Labor believes this requires an integrated, comprehensive strategy including cooperation with and capacity building for local security forces.
- 135 Labor has developed and is implementing a national strategy to counter violent extremism. Labor believes a national approach involving engagement with local communities and a strong partnership between Australian governments will be essential to the development of a coordinated and effective approach to address this complex problem.
- 136 Labor believes that the global nature and reach of various terrorist organisations will mean that Australia will rely on global intelligence exchange—as well as support—for an expanding range of UN multilateral measures designed to combat terrorist financing and explicitly to outlaw defined terrorist organisations.
- 137 Labor believes that addressing terrorism requires a long term commitment to international efforts to stabilise Afghanistan. This requires both a military commitment and an effective strategy to build the capacity of the Afghan Government to manage its own affairs. Labor is also committed to comprehensive engagement with Pakistan to assist that country in tackling its internal security and economic challenges. Labor also remains committed to assisting Iraq to achieve long-term stability.
- 138 Labor is also committed to ensuring Australia's cyber security arrangements are able to meet the challenges presented by the electronic environment, which is presenting additional opportunity and vulnerabilities for individuals, business and government, with sophisticated attacks coming from criminal groups and foreign governments.
- 139 Finally, Labor is working together with industry to ensure there are sufficient measures in place to reduce the risk of chemicals of security concern.

Emergency management

- 140 Labor will ensure that the Commonwealth provides strong leadership in promoting an all-hazards approach to emergency management and disaster resilience that focuses on how prevention, mitigation and preparation can improve response and recovery.
- 141 Labor will lead the implementation of the National Disaster Resilience Strategy agreed to by COAG in February 2011 which identifies priority areas to build disaster resilient communities across Australia.
- 142 Recognising that disaster resilience is a shared responsibility for individuals, households, businesses and communities, as well as for governments, Labor will work with all stakeholders to deliver sustained behavioural change and enduring partnerships.

- 143 Labor will work with regional neighbours/partners to encourage the exchange of information, capabilities and expertise as well operational assistance and cooperation during emergency situations.
- 144 Labor will work with other levels of government to ensure local communities understand the potential risks and are capable of addressing of them.
- 145 Labor believes that appropriate mitigation activities are vital in preventing loss of life and damage to property caused by natural disasters. Labor will achieve this by working with states and territories to ensure that national, state and local disaster plans, strategies and program funding reflects these goals.

Strength, sustainability and self reliance in defence

- 146 The foundation of Labor's Defence policy is the principle of Australian self reliance. Labor considers that Australia's armed forces need to be able to defend Australia without relying on the combat forces of other countries. Labor believes that the principle of self reliance reflects, fundamentally, Australia's sense of itself as an independent nation.
- 147 Notwithstanding its commitment to a self reliant Defence policy, Labor recognises the importance of strong bilateral and multilateral Defence relationships in providing for Australia's Defence. Where appropriate, Labor will both strengthen existing Defence ties through the UN, with our key allies, and by building new relationships within the Asia-Pacific region.
- 148 Labor believes that the ADF needs to possess the capability to make contributions to international operations led by the UN and Australia's key allies in the pursuit of broader national strategic objectives. Those contingents will be drawn from the forces and capabilities that are developed for the defence of Australia and for operations in our region.
- 149 Labor will ensure that ADF capability development is directly related to Australia's strategic interests and that appropriate regular strategic reviews are undertaken with public reports published.
- 150 Labor is committed to maintaining a strong and efficiently managed Defence organisation that possesses the equipment, personnel and skills that are needed to meet the demands placed upon it by the Australian Government. Labor will ensure the Defence Strategic Reform Program continues to focus on greater accountability in Defence spending, well-planned reform which includes employee input, and the conversion of military and contractor positions to public sector employment where it is more cost effective and appropriate to do so.

International and regional defence relationships

- 151 Labor recognises the importance of both bilateral and multilateral Defence relationships in achieving security for Australia and creating and maintaining stability in Australia's strategic environment. Defence cooperation with Australia's neighbours is important for building regional security.
- 152 Labor will ensure that Defence cooperation does not contribute to any suppression or violation of human rights or democratic freedoms. Labor will closely monitor the human rights performance of foreign military forces with which Australia engages in defence cooperation. If necessary, Australia will work with regional military forces to increase respect for human rights and democratic processes.

Pine Gap

- 153 The Pine Gap Joint Facility makes an important contribution to the Australia–US Alliance as well as to the deterrence and avoidance of conflict. Labor will require that this facility continue to be managed and operated on a joint basis and only with the Australian Government's full knowledge of and concurrence with the facility's activities. Labor will ensure the operations of the Joint Facility are consistent with Australia's national security, disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. Labor will require that this facility continue to be managed and operated as a joint Australian–US facility within Full Knowledge and Concurrence arrangements to ensure the protection of Australian sovereignty.

Ballistic missile defence

- 154 Labor considers that the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and ballistic missile delivery systems is one of the most serious international security issues confronting the world today. Labor considers effective efforts to combat these developments require sustained multilateral, diplomatic and defence cooperation and action.
- 155 Labor is concerned that as a unilateral response to the problem of ballistic missile proliferation, national missile defence is disproportionate, technically questionable, costly and likely to be counter-productive. It also has the potential to undermine non-proliferation and derail world progress towards nuclear disarmament. Labor also notes that national missile defence would impact on the security situation in the Asia–Pacific region, and that this could have serious consequences for Australia's strategic circumstances and national security.

Defence relationships in the Asia–Pacific region

- 156 Labor is committed to Australia comprehensively engaging with other nations in the Asia–Pacific region, as part of its efforts to foster and preserve peace, stability and security in the region. Labor recognises that these efforts are increasingly fundamental to Australia's own national security. Australia's participation in the Five Power Defence Arrangements will remain an important aspect of regional policy under Labor.
- 157 The continued development of Indonesia's democracy and joint cooperation against terrorism, is allowing Australia to build on the strength of our relationship with that country. Labor will ensure that any Defence relationship between Australia and Indonesia will be as equal partners, to the benefit of both countries and that of our broader region while ensuring that Labor's commitment to liberal democratic and human rights values is not compromised.
- 158 Australia has an ongoing relationship with New Zealand, based on historical and close ties.
- 159 Practical and mutually beneficial Defence and Security cooperation with Japan and the Republic of Korea reinforces the stability and security currently present in the Asia–Pacific region.
- 160 Australia has a special role and responsibility in its relations with Papua New Guinea. Labor in government will assist Papua New Guinea to develop an effective and disciplined defence force, while encouraging non-military solutions to problems of internal security and order.
- 161 Security of the Pacific nations is essential for regional security and Australia's own defence. Labor will increase Australia's efforts to engage in supporting sustainable development of the Pacific nations through the creation of democratic institutions, effective law enforcement and modern Defence Forces. Labor understands that this is a long-term process that must not be prematurely disengaged from. The improved ADF Civil-Military Cooperation capability represented by the Asia–Pacific Civil Military—Centre of Excellence will provide much needed support to these efforts.

Allied use of Australian facilities

- 162 Labor will support the use of facilities in Australia by the armed forces of friendly countries for combined exercises, training and goodwill visits, provided that in times of peace:
- use of Australian ports by foreign warships does not extend to the home porting of any of those vessels in Australia
 - staging of military aircraft through Australian airfields or airspace shall only be for such purposes as may be agreed beforehand by the Australian Government
 - no nuclear, biological or chemical weapons may be stored or stationed in Australia
 - nuclear powered vessels visit only those ports which have been determined as being suitable for those vessels and provided also that all other safety precautions and conditions that are deemed necessary by the relevant Australian authorities are complied with by the vessels concerned
 - appropriate environmental safeguards are in place.

Defence personnel and training

- 163 Labor is committed to an ADF which is made up of highly motivated, skilled, well trained and well equipped personnel who volunteer for service.
- 164 Labor is committed to ensuring female military personnel have equal opportunities for career progression and development within the ADF. Labor welcomes the Review into the treatment of women at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) by the Australian Human Rights Commission and welcomes the commitment by government and Defence to implement the recommendations.
- 165 Labor will ensure that ADF pay and conditions continue to be fixed in a fair and transparent manner by an independent tribunal, and will review pay and conditions to ensure that recruitment attractions match those more broadly available in the labour market. Labor believes that ADF personnel have the right to form, and be members of, associations in respect of their pay and conditions. Labor will allow associations that can demonstrate a substantial membership to have the right to appear before the independent tribunal to present the views of serving members.
- 166 Labor will develop a better program of career planning, invest in better training programs providing marketable skills on discharge and will revise the approach to overseas deployments to ensure longer periods of rest and recuperation which is a more manageable result for families.
- 167 Labor will continue to develop incentives will also be developed to improve retention rates and reduce wastage caused by lack of direction, poor career planning opportunities and improper use of medical discharge processes.
- 168 Labor believes it is important that the nation's Defence Force be representative of the community it serves. Defence's recruitment policies should ensure that the ethnic composition of the ADF better reflects the cross section of Australian people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- 169 Labor believes that the Reserves are a critical component of Australia's Defence capability that need to be able to contribute to any sort of operation in which Australia might participate. Labor is committed to integrating full-time ADF and Reserve elements in a total force structure where the different role of all components is properly understood, valued and utilised effectively.

Occupational health and safety and workers' compensation

- 170 Labor will continue to support a modern, dedicated Occupational Health and Safety regime for all personnel, supported by a fair and supportive military rehabilitation and compensation scheme. Labor believes that these arrangements should reflect the unique employment circumstances of the ADF, the need to respect the historical approach to injury and illness incurred overseas and the need for firm policies of prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, return to work and income maintenance measures.
- 171 Labor is acutely aware of the stresses of military duty on active service overseas and the need to ensure that ADF members receive full support and treatment in the event of the debilitating and career threatening risks associated with mental health disorders. Labor will review the adequacy of current mental health screening and assessments processes and ensure early intervention and treatment in every case. This will also extend to include cases where there is abuse of processes of military justice, harassment, or discrimination, likely to result in stress affecting duties and career potential.

Military justice

- 172 As part of its commitment to lift the standard of military justice in the ADF, Labor is committed to making improvements to the system of military justice.
- 173 Labor will continue to improve the system to overcome any problem of harassment and breaches of natural justice. Labor will not tolerate failure to investigate complaints, cover up, or inadequate investigation. Labor will ensure that all allegations of sexual assault involving members of the ADF are referred immediately to the civilian police for investigation with total cooperation from the ADF command.
- 174 Labor will ensure impartial, rigorous and fair outcomes for all affected parties in any complaint lodged for redress. Labor is committed to a strict accountability system to improve the transparency and public accountability of all military justice investigations.

Defence administration, industry and procurement

- 175 Labor is committed to fostering a strong and viable, long-term domestic Defence industry and will ensure that government policy reflects that commitment.
- 176 Labor recognises that Defence acquisition plays a significant role in the modernisation of Australian industry and the development of a skills base. Labor will optimise Australian Defence Industry involvement while maintaining a high level of marketplace competition and value for money for the Australian taxpayer. Consistent with Australia's international obligations, Labor will maximise the participation of Australian companies, particularly SMEs, and as a consequence of Australian jobs, in Defence procurement contracts, and ensure that Australian supply capabilities are maintained and enhanced through the application of Australian Industry Capability Plans. Labor will ensure that contractual obligations arising from such arrangements are enforced.
- 177 Labor will ensure that Defence procurement decisions will be taken on a 'whole-of-life' cost basis, and will take full account of strategic considerations and the need to maintain and develop critical supply capabilities. Given the importance to the security and safety of our armed forces of the best quality and highest technical standard defence uniforms, Labor will, consistent with Australia's international obligations, maximise the participation of Australian textile garment and footwear suppliers in defence procurement, and ensure that ADF textile garment and footwear suppliers fully comply with the government's ethical procurement principles set out in this Platform.

- 178 Labor will ensure that future outsourcing only occurs in areas where real long-term savings can be generated without compromising the operational capability of the ADF.
- 179 Labor is committed to continuing the reform and improve Defence acquisitions, informed by the findings and implementation of the Mortimer and Rizzo reports and the Black review, to ensure that the Defence procurement process delivers better outcomes for the ADF, the Australian Government, Australian industry and the Australian community.
- 180 Labor recognises the cultural, heritage and environmental significance of many surplus Defence properties around Australia. Labor will review on an ongoing basis the future of all sites identified as being surplus to Defence needs, before deciding whether to sell or transfer these properties to the community. Labor will ensure that Defence consults with all affected parties, including local communities, local and state government agencies, and private interests before determining the future of individual sites.

Defence industry sectoral plans

- 181 Labor supports the development of Defence Industry sectoral plans for shipbuilding, aerospace, electronics, land and weapons.
- 182 Labor believes that the sectoral plans represent a more strategic approach to Defence Industry policy that will enable Australia to sustain key industry capabilities necessary to meet our long-term national security needs.
- 183 Labor supports a Defence shipbuilding and submarine sector plan that maintains a viable Defence shipbuilding and repair capability in Australia. Labor will ensure that the ship building and repair industry is based on a competitive private sector model in such a way as to ensure continuity of work through prime and sub-contractors, recognising the need for flexibility in the national heavy engineering sector.
- 184 Labor recognises that a viable and competitive naval ship building industry is strategically vital for Australia's defence, as well as for the continuing health of the heavy engineering and high-tech industries involved in modern weaponry.
- 185 Labor is committed to the regular publication of a Defence Capability Plan to ensure that the Defence industry sector remains informed about future acquisition projects, particularly the proposed timing, cost and level of capability associated with such projects.
- 186 Labor believes that the Defence Science and Technology Organisation has an impressive record of research and development of Defence-related technologies. Labor will further expand and encourage the links between Defence Science and Technology Organisation and the Australian Defence industry, including technology transfer to Australian industry. As far as possible, Labor will foster the retention of intellectual property ownership in Australia, including where appropriate ownership of intellectual property by Defence.

Defence exports

- 187 Labor will ensure government control over the manufacture and export of arms, munitions and military goods and services.

- 188 Labor supports the export of Australian Defence equipment within strict guidelines. Labor will not permit Defence exports to countries where those exports would:
- have an adverse impact on Australia's security interests
 - contravene UN embargoes
 - pose a clear, identifiable risk of being used for the major suppression or violation of human rights or fundamental freedoms.
- 189 Defence exports are important in maintaining local industry support for the ADF and in contributing to Australia's own Defence capability. Accordingly, Labor has established the Defence Export Unit to ensure maximum opportunities for the Australian Defence industry, within the strict guidelines required for Defence exports.

Meeting the needs of Australia's veterans

- 190 Labor respects the tradition of special care for Australia's servicemen and women who serve overseas, within the modern context. Labor will continue to care for and honour veterans for their service to the maintenance of world peace and domestic security through dedicated programs of support, care and commemoration.
- 191 Labor notes that these traditional policies and programs have evolved slowly over almost a century and, that in some instances, may no longer be consistent with the needs of veterans and their families in a modern society.
- 192 Labor will not tolerate any further erosion of the traditional distinction accorded to those with warlike service as appropriate in a modern service context.
- 193 Labor, recognises that inconsistencies have arisen in the approach taken by government to the management of veterans' and war widows' entitlements.
- 194 Labor also recognises that many of these inconsistencies result from different judgements and perceptions in the past and cannot be remedied without considerable cost, as well as the risk of creating further inconsistencies.
- 195 Consistent with the philosophy of benefits being relevant to contemporary needs and with the principles of fairness, equity and transparency, Labor will continue to review policies to ensure that they adapted to and are appropriate for the current needs of our veteran community.

Veterans' needs

- 196 In addition to Labor's historic delivery of disability and compensation pension improvements, Labor will continue to explore equitable and affordable mechanisms for the improvement of other military pensions.
- 197 Labor's policy for veterans will be structured to respond to the differing needs of veterans according to their stage of life, with flexible programs based on meeting contemporary needs:
- Veterans who served in World War II, Korea and subsequent deployments in South East Asia who are now largely retired and whose issues are now predominantly ones of health and aged care.
 - Veterans who served in the Vietnam War, whose immediate needs are those of income security for their future retirement, support for the raising of families and programs of support for families suffering from the effects of substance abuse, gambling and acts of violence.
 - Those who have served in peace keeping missions, and deployments such as the Gulf, Timor Leste, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Solomon Islands, most of whom are yet to become veterans, but whose needs at present seem likely to emulate those of the Vietnam generation.

Veterans' families

- 198 Labor is committed to the care and welfare of veterans' partners and families who may have suffered as a result of the veteran's service, particularly from the ill health of a veteran, as part of a policy of lifelong care for those injured or affected by their service.
- 199 Labor will work to address the health and welfare needs of younger veterans' families.
- 200 Labor will ensure there are adequate programs to assist these families to meet the pressures and demands of modern society.
- 201 Labor will also undertake health studies into the health and welfare of children of younger veterans, to better establish whether there are any intergenerational health effects flowing from their service.

Programs of income support

- 202 Consistent with general policies which have seen the provision of safety nets for those who are disadvantaged in society and unable to take their place in the workforce due to disability or age; special provision has always been made for veterans and their dependants. This uniquely includes the effects of service which impact on veterans' employability within the labour market.
- 203 Recognising the principle of entitlements based on need, and consistent with the current principles governing the provision of income support, Labor will continue to provide programs of income support for veterans, their partners and widows, when as the result of service in the ADF, they have been unable to provide for themselves and their families due to loss of work capacity, death, or age.

Disability compensation

- 204 Injuries and illness resulting from veterans' service overseas have traditionally been compensated in a separate scheme in recognition of the different circumstances and status of that service. This is reflected in some circumstances by a more generous standard of proof, the lack of any onus of proof and a longstanding commitment to the benefit of the doubt operating in the veteran's favour.
- 205 Labor will honour these commitments and the values on which they are based.
- 206 Labor is committed to the support of veterans through a range of programs including the Building Excellence in Support and Training and Training & Information Program programs ensuring that ex-service organisations can assist with compensation claims for their members and provide welfare support.

War widows

- 207 Australians have always cared and provided for those whose partners were lost in action or who died as the result of their war-caused injuries or illness. Labor recognises that the traditional programs of support for war widows as provided for in the Veterans' Entitlement Act may no longer be relevant and that there are strong perceptions in the community of unfairness with respect to eligibility.
- 208 Labor also clearly recognises there are some widows in need of greater support, especially those in private rental accommodation, and younger widows without children whose entitlements have been reduced in the past.
- 209 Recognising the difficulties faced by a new generation of war spouses, Labor will continue to provide support for war spouses and their children, to enter academic or vocational training.

Health care

- 210 Health care policy for veterans has, from the time of Federation, provided for free treatment of all service-related injury and illness. This is now denoted by provision of a White Card.
- 211 In more recent times, free private health care for all health conditions has been provided by the Gold Card to a range of veterans and widows. Eligibility is automatic for some classes of veterans and widows but generally requires warlike (qualifying) service and an age of 70 or above.
- 212 Assistance in the home, aimed at keeping ageing veterans and widows out of costly institutionalised care is also provided under the Homecare Program, consistent with the Home and Community Care program available to the community at large. This forms part of the traditional approach of lifelong care to those who served Australia abroad.
- 213 Labor will retain the current programs of health care for veterans and honour the historic commitment to free treatment for all service-related injuries and disease. The Gold, White and Orange cards will be retained with existing entitlements.
- 214 Labor will expedite the current program of mortality and health studies and research into past deployments, as well as ensuring that the current processes for future deployments properly deal with health risks in advance, and after return to Australia—particularly with respect to record-keeping.
- 215 Labor recognises that mental health issues arising from service, such as post traumatic stress disorder, have affected veterans from all conflicts. Labor encourages and supports measures designed to ensure that existing programs take account of the mental health needs and requirements of veterans.

Commemoration

- 216 Commemoration of veterans, their commitment and sacrifice has historically been restricted to the observance of ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day by the public, with little government involvement. Labor introduced the current program of commemoration in 1992 and has continued to support that effort.
- 217 Labor supports a bipartisan approach to commemorative activity, with a concentration on educative programs under the aegis of the Australian War Memorial. ANZAC Day will continue to be the central focus of commemorative commitments.
- 218 Labor recognises the significance, importance and sacred nature of battlefields where our troops have lost their lives. Where possible, Labor will actively work with foreign governments and other parties to protect and preserve the integrity of significant battlefields where Australian troops have served. These locations include, but are not limited to, the Gallipoli Peninsula and the Kokoda Track.
- 219 Labor will implement education and information campaigns to ensure all Australians, especially the young, develop a full appreciation of the sacrifice and service of our veterans and current servicemen and women.

Administration

- 220 Currently administration of veterans' and ex-service personnel matters are concentrated within the Department of Veterans' Affairs, recognising the need for better continuity of specialised client service around Australia. Recognising that the administration of veterans' policy and ex-service personnel matters will continue to merge in the future as the nature of defence service evolves and the older veteran cohort diminishes in number, Labor will continue with a dedicated and properly funded agency for veterans within the Defence portfolio.

Resolutions to the National Platform

Resolutions for Chapter 1

Members and our values

That this Conference recognises that:

- the support and activism of our members is critical to our success as a political party and to the enduring success of the labour movement in winning broad community acceptance of progressive policies
- members contribute to the development of Labor's core principles, articulated through our platform
- all constituent units of the Party and all elected representatives of the Party have a responsibility to our members to observe the Platform in carrying out their roles.

Resolutions for Chapter 2

Public services supporting a strong economy

National Conference recognises the essential role government and public services play in supporting a strong economy and a fair community. Strong and sustainable public finances are critical to Labor achieving its agenda in government. The public service plays a vital role in providing the high quality policy advice and the essential services that enable government to develop good policy and serve the community. Government, economic and legislative involvement is essential to provide opportunities for all Australians, improve equity through redistribution, provide public safety and security and protect the community through the regulation necessary in a market economy.

National Conference acknowledges there are genuine concerns within the Australian Public Service and in the broader community about the impact of repeated saving measures on public services, including increases to the efficiency dividend and a range of other initiatives.

National Conference rejects the Coalition's approach to dramatically cut public services and acknowledges the Australian Public Service is of a modest size compared to other Western nations, and is recognised internationally as providing high quality services and policy advice.

National Conference acknowledges that it is in the nation's interest to ensure the Australian Public Service remains efficient, accountable, professional, independent and apolitical.

Therefore National Conference calls on the Federal Labor Government to work with public sector unions and employees to find a more sustainable funding model for the Australian Public Service which will:

- deliver quality, effective and efficient services that are affordable and accessible for all Australians
- deliver value for money to the community
- provide certainty for clients, employees and agencies
- drive real public sector productivity, efficiency and improvements to service and policy capability
- ensure the public service provides secure, high quality jobs and help attract and retain talented employees.

The trans pacific partnership agreement

The Trans-Pacific Partnership offers the prospect of more and better jobs through improved access to member countries' markets for Australian exporting businesses and their employees. Australia's position on the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement must be consistent with the provisions of the National Platform, specifically that it:

- does not undermine the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme
- provides for national treatment—that foreign and domestic companies are treated equally under the law—while not conferring greater legal rights on foreign businesses than those available to domestic businesses
- does not require Australia to remove protection of its cultural industries
- retains the Foreign Investment Review Board and its powers to review foreign investment in the public interest
- retains legitimate quarantine provisions for reducing the risk of imported pests and diseases
- retains the flexibility to encourage industry development including through research and development, regional development and appropriate environmental, employment and procurement policies
- contains enforceable labour clauses that require signatories to enforce the core international Labour Organisation standards in the ILO conventions
- contains enforceable environmental clauses that require signatories to meet all relevant international environmental standards, including those provided for in applicable UN international environmental agreements.

Resolutions for Chapter 3

Live animal exports

Labor strongly supports the Australia domestic chilled, frozen and processed meat industry. Labor supports the domestic industry through:

- the support of infrastructure as is necessary to promote a strong Australian meat processing industry
- a stronger focus on the elimination and/or reduction of trade barriers in the international market for processed Australian meat
- work with state/territory governments, industry and importing countries to promote the trade in chilled, frozen and processed meat from animals humanely transported and slaughtered in Australia.

Labor recognises the importance of the live animal export trade, particularly for employment in Northern Australia.

Labor also recognises that for the industry to be sustainable into the long term continual improvements need to be made, including:

- complete supply chain assurance for the live animal trade, as detailed in Labor's response to the Farmer Review
- actively encouraging the expansion of stunning of animals prior to slaughter in our export markets.

Labor is taking action to encourage the uptake of stunning through:

- advocating for the inclusion of mandatory stunning in the OIE guidelines
- promoting the use of stunning including through work instructions through regional OIE forums
- pursuing, where possible, bilateral agreements which include stunning with our trading partners
- supporting industry efforts to develop a voluntary code of conduct that raises standards above that of the OIE guidelines to include stunning

Australian manufacturing

Conference acknowledges the importance of Australia's manufacturing industry to the nation and calls on Labor to develop a vision for manufacturing to 2020 and beyond, plan and take further action to help secure the industry's future. Conference commends the Prime Minister for establishing her Manufacturing Taskforce.

At the end of the last decade (2009–2010) the manufacturing industry Employed almost 1 million Australians directly (around one third of that in regional Australia) and accounted for more than 10 per cent of all full time jobs, 12 per cent of all private sector jobs, around 20 per cent of all blue collar jobs and employed more than 32,000 apprentices. It is the largest driver of high value services and each job in manufacturing generates on average between two and five jobs in the rest of the economy.

Australia has more than 90,000 manufacturing businesses and the industry paid out nearly \$54 billion in wages and salaries to its employees and nearly \$5 billion in superannuation.

Manufacturers invested nearly \$20 billion (gross) in plant, equipment and factory buildings and related assets as well as \$700 million in training its workers. Manufacturing is the biggest spender on applied research and innovation with spill over effects into the rest of the economy and a key driver of economy wide productivity improvement. It makes up nearly 60 per cent of world trade and hence is critical for export earnings.

While manufacturing output and investment continues to grow the industry has been hit hard in recent times losing more than 100,000 jobs since 2008. Put simply, manufacturing is currently facing its biggest crisis since the Great Depression.

The high dollar, the impact of the mining boom and the two speed economy, as well as the slump in economy wide productivity growth over the past decade has diminished the international competitiveness of Australia's manufacturing industry. In addition many of our competitors in China, India and the advanced economies have invested more in R&D, technology, design and built more successful businesses with the management systems and capabilities to succeed in world markets. Simply put Australian industry faces a significant competitiveness challenge.

Manufacturers also face serious problems to secure access to market opportunities both in Australia and in export markets. In some cases access is restricted by trade barriers, and a host of advantages (including artificially depressed exchange rates) that foreign governments use to help local firms win access to markets. At home access to business opportunities is sometimes constrained by large players, such as the retail duopoly, unfairly restricting access to work through a variety of unfair practices that don't give Australian firms a full and fair opportunity to win business. It is also constrained by factors such as the difficulty of accessing risk capital and funds to expand the business.

Only Labor can lead the transformation of Australian firms to be internationally competitive and environmentally sustainable. Labor will develop and implement the long term vision and plan and take the actions to help the nations manufacturers become more competitive and get access to new opportunities.

The Coalition cannot provide the leadership to do this. They presided over a decade of underinvestment in infrastructure, skills and innovation which drove economy wide productivity into the ground. Their WorkChoices industrial relations agenda focused on a narrow cost cutting approach that created the high stress low trust workplace culture that is the antithesis of productivity. They do not and will never have an agenda to enhance the international competitiveness of Australia's manufacturing industry.

The only access the Coalition are focused on is giving firms access to individual contracts and lawful ways to slash penalty rates, hire, fire and lock out who they like when they like. Their track record in government of giving market economy status to China with no reciprocal obligations did nothing to help

Australian industry access the China market. And the leader of the opposition's policy while IR Minister of trying to get his cabinet colleagues to only give access to incentives to automotive firms who went down the path of individual contracts is the kind of conditional access one should expect in government procurement and other industry policy programs if he were ever to become Prime Minister. The Coalition is committed to massive cuts in automotive, steel, TCF and other manufacturing support programs.

Conference condemns the Coalition of a race to the bottom of cutting wages and disinvestment. It is a recipe for deindustrialisation rather than industry modernisation and renewal.

In developing a future for manufacturing with its industry and innovation programs Conference calls on Labor to include both generic policies that help all manufacturers as well as sector based initiatives to deal with the industry specific issues of improving competitiveness and getting access to market opportunities.

For generic issues Conference calls on Labor to:

- consider and implement measures to assist businesses manage the volatile high Australian dollar and the impact it is having on manufacturing, exports and import replacement. Such consideration should include, but not be limited to, financial products that assist in currency risk management
- continue to address skill shortages in manufacturing and the resource sector brought about by the mining boom through an increased investment in skills and participation
- significantly strengthen the agencies that help manufacturers win international business opportunities particularly in Asia and to ensure a co-ordinated and cohesive approach rather than in isolated silos
- reinvigorate a 'whole of government' approach to tripartite consultative and engagement with the industry
- support investment in strategic industry capabilities at both the sectoral and regional levels and connect manufacturers with the right knowledge and service sectors to improve their capacity
- develop a comprehensive plan to transform the capability of Australian management to win business and manage and grow their firms in partnership with shareholders and their employees
- pursue actions in multi-lateral forums to ensure all nations adopt free-floating currencies and strengthen clauses in bilateral and multilateral agreements that penalise nations that refuse to abide by the global rules of international trade
- significantly increase forensic expert resources to customs and border security for the purposes of dumping cases
- vigorously pursue Australia's economic rights and interests and protect Australian manufacturers through an increased number of legal actions and advocacy at the WTO
- continue to strengthen the Australian Industry Participation Policy (AIPP) that provides immediate solutions to the demand crisis in the manufacturing sector by allowing domestic manufacturers to compete on a level playing field for major project work in the public and private sectors. This is particularly important for projects in the resources sector and related construction activity. The government should enhance transparency by providing a report to Parliament within the Innovation Departments Annual report on the progress in implementing Australian industry participation policies. The report should include outcomes for manufacturing industry and best practice examples. The government should also ensure greater transparency of AIPP plans by the publication of AIP plans of mining, resource and other project proponents
- review research and development corporations and CRC's operating in various industry sectors to ensure they are operating efficiently and effectively and have appropriate tripartite representation.

At the level of the industry sector Conference calls on Labor to:

- remain committed to the New Car Plan for a Greener Future and ensure co-investment arrangements to secure the investment necessary for new energy efficient models designed, engineered and manufactured in Australia with high levels of local content

- energise the defence manufacturing plan so that Australian industry participation (AIP) and capability enhancement is a national priority. Through the submarine program, related infrastructure investments and a long term plan for skills, formulate a strategy to build a world class marine engineering industry in Australia
- develop a comprehensive “whole of government” Clean Tech strategy that maximizes the opportunities for Australian manufacturing that arise from the policies and programs in place to support the Clean Energy Future and ensure a place within the \$6 trillion global clean-tech industry. This strategy needs to ensure that the billions of dollars in funding will support new firms and industries; and through a strong local content focus and access to funding, support existing firms and industries. This strategy must incorporate opportunities for regional areas disproportionately feeling the pain in the ‘slow lane’ of the two speed economy
- develop an Australian Industry participation plan for the printing industry
- in food processing, implement a plan to ensure better access to domestic and export markets, increased innovation and brand recognition of Australian produce. This needs to include a national food processing industry development strategy which provides food manufacturers with greater access to export markets whilst building upon the ‘clean, green and safe’ image and brand recognition enjoyed by the sector.

The strategy needs to ensure that generic food and domestic consumables are not used by retailers as a means of undermining the value of established brands including the proper identification of the manufacturer of the product. Generic products should be provided to the consumer as a choice and not as a means of displacing existing locally manufactured brands. Government should take steps to ensure Australian maintains and develop its capabilities in the full range of domestic food processing industries. The food processing strategy must consider country of origin labelling and content labelling so as to continue to properly promote Australian grown, processed and manufactured food and produce and help develop consumer awareness and provide for truth in labelling.

- Highlight any market failures in industries such as baking and paint where the concentration of market power in the hands of a small group of retailers has distorted the price that manufacturers are able to charge for these goods. Ensure through regulation and oversight given to our regulators that these retailers are not abusing their market power to artificially lower the prices charged for these goods, contributing to a decline in the viability of these industries and pressure on working conditions
- Continue to implement measures designed to foster and develop our competitive edge within the pharmaceutical industry (particularly in research and development) in a manner that ensures that knowledge and intellectual property is not simply transferred offshore
- In metals manufacturing industries such as steel, aluminium and glass create a robust Australian Industry Participation Policy that provides access to and strongly monitors and enforces the use of Australian local content in the projected \$600 billion of resource sector investment and construction work. Such an AIPP is needed to help alleviate the demand crisis impacting many parts of metals manufacturing and help secure a minimum level of local content in major resource projects. This needs to be supported by continued reform and implementation of an appropriately resourced anti dumping regime with a focus on rigorous and forensic investigations of dumping allegations; identifying subsidies and applying countervailing duties; and identifying particular market situations, price and input cost distortions. This process should include information sharing and consultations with other government agencies and international jurisdictions
- Work with all levels of government to develop opportunities for Australian building products suppliers by improving the provision of housing and social services for mining communities and communities servicing the mining boom
- Develop a plan for the wood and paper industries, taking advantage of the carbon constrained economy that recognises their advantages as low energy renewable products

- Accelerate the transformation of the textiles, clothing and footwear sector through a TCF Industry plan which targets assistance to support job retention and growth, development of new and innovative products and processes, skills and training and new opportunities in ethical production and export markets.

Maximise opportunities for the TCF sector in government tenders and private investment by ensuring that a fixed proportion of government procurement contracts are allocated to small and medium enterprises. Labor will work with agencies to extend requirements for ethical labour standards to companies tendering for government contracts to source their TCF work from offshore. Labor will require businesses that receive government assistance to support local jobs and demonstrate compliance with Fair Work Principles.

Labor will support the rights of parties to freely negotiate clauses in certified agreements requiring procurement of Australian ethically made workwear, uniform, protective clothing and footwear.

Resolutions for Chapter 4

Marine parks

This Conference supports the approach taken by the Gillard Labor Government to establish a network of marine parks in Australian Commonwealth waters and recognises the importance of marine sanctuaries both in maintaining the environment and in strengthening and diversifying Australian economy beyond the boom. National Conference supports the Gillard Labor Government's creation of marine parks as an important part of regional economic development and infrastructure.

Resolutions for Chapter 5

Aviation—qantas

Conference notes with dismay Qantas management's disastrous and unjustified decision to shut down all aviation services without notice on October 29, 2011 and its ongoing objective of cutting Australian jobs in all fields of operation. Qantas management's decision to outsource or offshore existing work, thereby lowering pay, service standards is fundamentally inconsistent with maintaining a strong Australian national carrier. This year the carrier recorded another record profit of 530 million this year and awarded its CEO Alan Joyce a 71 per cent pay increase despite a 71 per cent fall in its share value.

Resolutions for Chapter 7

Gonski review into education

ALP National Conference welcomes the federal government's Gonski Review into School Funding in Australia. We recognise that this review is the first comprehensive review of education funding in Australia in decades.

This Conference also recognises that current school funding arrangements are in need of reform. The current Howard Government funding model is both complex and inequitable.

The Conference congratulates the federal government on nearly doubling education spending but notes that public spending on schools in Australia is still well below the OECD average and that considerable additional investment is needed in our schooling system to ensure that future generations of Australians have the knowledge, skills and creativity needed for the economic times ahead.

This Conference supports statements by the federal government that reaffirm government schools as the backbone of our education system. This Conference recognises that the success of Australian education is predicated on the existence of strong, vibrant, high quality schools across every sector. A fair and equitable funding system is critical to ensure that every Australian child receives a great education.

To this end, the Conference calls on the federal government in its response to the Gonski Review to:

- re-affirm Labor's commitment to a quality, public education system, by recognising that the primary goal of government education policy is the adequate resourcing of education in this country and improving education outcomes across all sectors
- consider the adoption of an objective National Resource Standard for schools to provide a benchmark against which public funding decisions can be assessed in a transparent and impartial way
- increase investment in school education across all governments, federal and state, so as to bring Australia in line with comparable OECD nations.

Resolutions for Chapter 8

Increasing the birthweight of Indigenous babies

Labor recognises that if we are to increase the life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, we need to increase the birth weight of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are two times more likely to give birth to low weight babies than non-Aboriginal women. Low birth weight babies are at greater risk of poor health and death, require longer periods of hospitalisation after birth and are more likely to develop chronic illness later in life. Labor will focus on improving the health and wellbeing of pregnant Aboriginal women to increase the birth weight of new babies and development in early infancy.

Privatisation of West Australian public hospitals

This Conference condemns the Western Australian Liberal Government for its program of privatising Western Australia's public hospitals. The Western Australian community deserves and expects first class public hospitals which are owned and operated by, and accountable to, their state government, not hospitals run by private operators who will put the interests of owners first rather than the interests of patients.

Resolutions for Chapter 9

National cultural policy

National Conference strongly supports the development of the National Cultural Policy directed towards innovative cultural and economic progress. The National Cultural Policy will increase support to emerging artists, musicians, writers and other creative practitioners.

The National Conference calls on the Australian Labor Party to:

- recognise, through the National Cultural Policy, the contribution that creative and cultural industries make towards:
 - sustainable employment
 - social inclusion
 - social and cultural connectivity.
- support the development of local content, including production in regional areas, to tell local stories and foster community cohesion.

Promoting harmony in Australia

That Labor will seek to promote greater harmony between Australians of diverse and varied cultural and religious backgrounds and will engage with communities to identify areas of discrimination or disadvantage being experienced, with a view to crafting appropriate policy interventions.

Supporting a national disability insurance scheme

Labor believes that all people with a disability have the same rights to health, work, adequate housing, and social participation as the rest of the Australian community.

Labor believes that the current system of disability care and support is letting people with disability and their carers down. People with disability do not have access to the level of care and support we expect for them; and the families and carers of people with disability are filling the gaps of unmet need in the system. We believe that people with disability and their carers should have access to the same choices and opportunities to participate in economic, social and community life as other Australians, and that our system of care and support for people with disability should support them to do so.

Conference welcomes the release of the landmark Productivity Commission report of 10 August 2011, which recommended the establishment of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and a National Injury Insurance Scheme (NIIS) for people requiring lifetime care and support for catastrophic injuries.

This Conference supports the establishment of a NDIS which would entitle Australians to care and support over the course of their lives in the event of significant disability. An NDIS should provide individualised life-time care and support for people with disabilities from the point of diagnosis, provide choice and certainty and a whole-of-life perspective for people with disability and their carers.

Conference also supports the establishment of a NIIS for people who suffer catastrophic injury and calls upon state and territory governments to work with the federal government to establish a no-fault, federated model to provide fully funded care and support for all cases of catastrophic injury in Australia. Throughout our history as a party, Labor has invested in strong and innovative social supports, to ensure that no Australian falls through the cracks. Medicare, the minimum wage, the age pension and superannuation are essential pillars of social infrastructure in Australia, delivered by Labor. We understand that a NDIS will build on this legacy and provide an essential pillar of support to Australians with disability, their families and carers. Labor is committed to working to achieve this outcome.

Conference commends the leadership of the Gillard Labor Government in the fundamental reform of disability services and recognises that work to lay the foundations for an NDIS and NIIS has begun.

Conference also acknowledges the importance of all levels of government, including state governments who have primary responsibility for disability support services, working together to achieve fundamental disability reform.

Resolutions for Chapter 10

Harmonising anti-discrimination laws

National Conference strongly endorses the Labor Government's push to harmonise anti-discrimination laws within a single national law and the intention, as part of this, to expand the coverage where appropriate. Conference especially notes the importance of including sexual orientation and gender identity in the new national law—both of which are currently significant gaps in the national legislative framework.

Resolutions for Chapter 11

Coptic christians in Egypt

Labor expresses concern at the increase in sectarian tensions and violence affecting Coptic Christians in Egypt and calls for clear respect for religious freedoms, human rights and the rule of law.

Cyprus

Labor will work to facilitate a just settlement of the Cyprus problem, based on UN resolutions respecting sovereignty, independence and the territorial integrity of Cyprus, and resulting in the demilitarisation and reunification of the island for the benefit of its entire people.

Zimbabwe

Conference congratulates successive Australian governments for their forthright support for democracy in Zimbabwe, since the current deep political crisis broke out in the year 2000, leading to catastrophic economic collapse, mass exodus of able-bodied Zimbabweans and widespread systematic human rights abuses.

Conference calls on the Australian government to maintain its support for the provision of basic services, which it began soon after the power-sharing transitional government was formed in February 2009.

In particular, calls for focused support on effective programs for national healing, reconciliation and integration that have been developed by the transitional government formed in February 2009.

As well, Conference calls on the Australian government to direct financial support to community-based organisations which support democracy and human rights.

Despite the positive momentum to overcome the political impasse which the transitional government represented, Conference notes that the effort to develop a genuinely democratic constitution as a preparation for a new election has been derailed by sustained political violence and manipulation by

ZANU-PF, and that Zimbabwe is again in a state of paralysis. This is because ZANU-PF, which lost the 2008 elections, continues to block the pathway to a new democratic Zimbabwe.

Urges the Australian government to continue to criticise ZANU-PF for this situation and to use all its diplomatic resources to encourage the Southern Africa Development Community nations to act more decisively to fulfil their commitment to democratic change, as sponsors of the September 2008 Global Political Agreement for Zimbabwe.

If and when new elections are held in Zimbabwe, Conference urges the Australian government to commit a strong election observer mission to monitor the pre-election period, the campaign, the voting and the counting of ballots.

Fiji

Conference condemns the serious breaches of human rights under the interim military regime in Fiji led by Commodore Bainimarama. Since the coup of 2006, the military regime has abrogated the Constitution, curtailed free and independent media, removed the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly, and undermined the independence of the judiciary.

Labor expresses its concern with the continuing deterioration of human rights in Fiji, in particular the right of workers to be represented by a trade union and to collectively bargain. Conference rejects the introduction of draconian decrees that remove the fundamental rights of public workers and workers in essential industries.

Labor notes with concern the impact of the current political situation on the economy, in particular the rising incidence of poverty and its negative impact on the welfare of the Fijian people.

Conference expresses its grave concern that elections expected in 2014 will not be conducted in a truly democratic, transparent or accountable manner, and calls on the regime to immediately restore fundamental democratic rights including:

- Respect for human rights
- Respect for freedom of expression and the right to peacefully assemble
- The removal of all media censorship and return to respect for freedom of speech
- Cessation of all arbitrary detentions
- The immediate revocation of the Public Emergency Regulations (2006)
- A return to the rule of law
- Reinstatement of and respect for an independent judiciary

Conference calls on the Australian Government to take all appropriate action to promote a return to genuine democracy and governance which respects and promotes human rights.

ANZAC centenary

That this Conference acknowledges:

- the significance of commemorating the Anzac Centenary, marking 100 years since our involvement in the First World War
- Labor's commitment to remember and honour the sacrifice of our service men and women and the Anzac tradition during 2014 to 2018
- the Centenary of Anzac provides an important opportunity for all Australians to understand our military history, how these events have shaped Australia and the contribution of our veteran community.

Commitment to returned service personnel

That this Conference acknowledges, in recognition of the courageous efforts of our service men and women:

- Labor's commitment to deliver the highest quality medical care through a comprehensive system of support
- that provides access to vital health services, rehabilitation and compensation
- the priority to enhance support available to our wounded, ill and injured from current operations
- the importance of families in providing support to our Defence personnel.

Western Sahara

Labor:

- supports self-determination for the people of Western Sahara and expresses its concerns about allegations of human rights abuses in Western Sahara
- supports UN efforts to improve the security and humanitarian situation of the people of Western Sahara and calls on all parties to uphold international human rights standards
- strongly supports the efforts of the United Nations, and of the relevant parties—the government of Morocco, and the Polisario Front—to press ahead to find an enduring settlement in relation to Western Sahara
- also strongly supports United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1754 which took note of proposals by both parties, and called on them to enter into negotiations 'without preconditions and in good faith' with the objective of achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

Iran

This Conference:

- congratulates the Australian Government for its strong support for successive United Nations Security Council decisions to place sanctions against Iran, including because of the Iranian government's failure to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency, and for imposing broad-ranging autonomous sanctions which go beyond those called for by the United Nations Security Council
- congratulates the Australian Government for condemning severe human rights abuses in Iran, including in speeches at the United Nations and by raising these concerns directly with the Iranian Government
- supports the independent trade union movement in Iran and condemns the regime's execution and imprisonment of the leaders and activists
- strongly condemns the Iranian government for its massive repression of unarmed protests following the 2009 election, which included reports of shooting of protesters, rape, torture, murder of detained protesters, and a wave of public executions of political prisoners and other alleged criminals, including minors
- strongly condemns the repression of the Iranian democratic opposition and attacks by Iraqi military units on unarmed residents of Ashraf City (which include 1000 women), including the attacks of April 8–11 2011, in which 35 were killed and 340 injured, mostly by gunshot
- calls on the Australian Government to urge the Iraqi Government end such attacks, investigate the events of 8–11 April, avoid violence in future and take all measures to ensure that the human rights of camp residents are respected
- welcomes the decision by UNHCR to commence individual refugee status determinations for Camp Ashraf and calls on the Australian Government to continue to support this initiative
- urges the Australian Government to call on the Iraqi Government to abandon the proposed 31 December deadline for the removal of Ashraf residents
- notes that these Iranians in Iraq were given the status of protected people under the Fourth Geneva Convention in 2004, by the Multi-National Force -Iraq, of which the United States and Australia are part
- calls on the Australian Government to urge the United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI) and the Iraqi Government to take all possible action to ensure the safety and security of camp residents especially when they are being transported to and from their UNHCR interviews
- notes the concerns by Camp residents for their safety should they be relocated throughout Iraq in smaller groups
- urges the Australian Government to work with other countries, including the United Kingdom and the United States, to encourage coordinated international pressure to ensure the rights of Camp Ashraf residents are protected
- calls on the Australian Government to support calls by the National Council of Resistance of Iran—the umbrella organisation of the democratic opposition—for international condemnation of acts of brutality by the clerical dictatorship in Iran.

Foreign aid targets

That Conference:

- congratulates the Federal Labor Government for its ongoing commitment to increase foreign aid to 0.5 per cent of Gross National Income (GNI) by 2015
- acknowledges the internationally agreed aid target for official development assistance is 0.7 per cent of GNI and encourages the Federal Labor Government to work towards this goal
- recognises Australia's foreign aid budget funds programs such as: the building of schools in Indonesia, provision of assistance to the people of Libya; and community development initiatives in Southeast Asia. These programs are a clear demonstration of the compassion, social justice and regional interest that is needed to ensure that Australia is a responsible global citizen, and plays its part in helping to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Southern Hemisphere Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone Treaty

To further our efforts towards the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons, Labor will work towards the future establishment of Southern Hemisphere Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone Treaty, based on the provisions in the Raratonga Treaty.

West Papua

This Labor Conference:

- expresses its continuing concern over violent incidents in the Papuan provinces
- welcomes the Indonesian President's announcement of 9 November 2011 that his government is willing to conduct a dialogue with Papuan Leaders
- calls on the Australian Government to monitor closely the situation in the Papuan provinces including progress on the President's dialogue process, and for the Australia Embassy to maintain its program of periodic visits
- supports increased access to the Papuan provinces by the media and human rights organisations
- calls for those responsible for human rights violations and for the killings and violence to be tried
- calls for the release of any person arrested solely for the peaceful expression of their political views
- asks for an independent progress report on the situation in the Papuan provinces to be provided to the next Federal Conference.

Chapter 12 National Constitution of the ALP

Part A—Objectives and Principles

Origins

- 1 The Australian Labor Party had its origins in:
 - the aspirations of the Australian people for a decent, secure, dignified and constructive way of life
 - the recognition by the trade union movement of the necessity for a political voice to take forward the struggle of the working class against the excesses, injustices and inequalities of capitalism
 - the commitment by the Australian people to the creation of an independent, free and enlightened Australia.

Objectives

- 2 The Australian Labor Party is a democratic socialist party and has the objective of the democratic socialisation of industry, production, distribution and exchange, to the extent necessary to eliminate exploitation and other anti-social features in these fields.
- 3 To achieve the political and social values of equality, democracy, liberty and social cooperation inherent in this objective, the Australian Labor Party stands for:
 - (a) redistribution of political and economic power so that all members of society have the opportunity to participate in the shaping and control of the institutions and relationships which determine their lives
 - (b) establishment and development of public enterprises, based upon federal, state and other forms of social ownership, in appropriate sectors of the economy
 - (c) democratic control and strategic social ownership of Australian natural resources for the benefit of all Australians
 - (d) maintenance of and support for a competitive non-monopolistic private sector, including small business and farming, controlled and owned by Australians, operating within clear social guidelines and objectives
 - (e) the right to own private property
 - (f) recognition and encouragement of the right of labour to organise for the protection and advancement of its interests
 - (g) the application of democracy in industry to increase the opportunities for people to work in satisfying, healthy and humane conditions; and to participate in and to increase their control over the decision making processes affecting them
 - (h) the promotion of socially appropriate technology and the monitoring of its introduction to ensure that the needs and interests of labour, as well as the requirements of competitive industry and consumer demand, are taken into consideration

- (i) the restoration and maintenance of full employment
- (j) the abolition of poverty, and the achievement of greater equality in the distribution of income, wealth and opportunity
- (k) social justice and equality for individuals, the family and all social units, and the elimination of exploitation in the home
- (l) equal access and rights to employment, education, information, technology, housing, health and welfare services, cultural and leisure activities and the law
- (m) reform of the Australian Constitution and other political institutions to ensure that they reflect the will of the majority of Australian citizens and the existence of Australia as an independent republic
- (n) recognition and protection of fundamental political and civil rights, including freedom of expression, the press, assembly, association, conscience and religion; the right to privacy; the protection of the individual from oppression by the state; and democratic reform of the Australian legal system
- (o) the development of a democratic communications system, as an integral part of a free society, to which all citizens have opportunities for free access
- (p) elimination of discrimination and exploitation on the grounds of class, race, sex, sexuality, religion, political affiliation, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, regional location, economic or household status
- (q) recognition of the prior ownership of Australian land by Aborigines and Islanders; recognition of their special and essential relationship with the land as the basis of their culture; and a commitment to the return of established traditional lands to the ownership of Aboriginal and Islander communities
- (r) recognition and encouragement of diversity of cultural expression and lifestyle within the Australian community
- (s) the use, conservation and enhancement of Australia's natural resources and environment so that the community's total quality of life, both now and into the future, is maintained and improved
- (t) recognition of the need to work towards achieving ecologically sustainable development
- (u) maintenance of world peace; an independent Australian position in world affairs; the recognition of the right of all nations to self determination and independence; regional and international agreement for arms control and disarmament; the provision of economic and social aid to developing nations; a commitment to resolve international conflicts through the UN; and a recognition of the inalienable right of all people to liberty, equality, democracy and social justice
- (v) commitment to and participation in the international democratic socialist movement as represented by the Socialist International
- (w) recognition of the right of citizens to work for progressive changes consistent with the broad principles of democratic socialism.

Principles of action

- 4 The Australian Labor Party believes that the task of building democratic socialism is a cooperative process that requires:
 - constitutional action through the federal and state parliaments, municipal and other statutory authorities
 - union action
 - ongoing action by organised community groups.

Membership and organisation

- 5 Membership of the Australian Labor Party is open to all residents of Australia who are prepared to accept its objectives and who have associations with no other political party.
- 6 Australian Labor Party policy is made by National Conferences comprising the federal and state parliamentary leadership of the Party, together with elected delegates from all states, the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and Australian Young Labor.
- 7 Party policy within the states and territories is framed by conferences of delegates elected by constituent branches and affiliated unions. Policy within the Australian Labor Party is not made by directives from the leadership, but by resolutions originating from branches, affiliated unions and individual Party members.

Part B—Rules

Name

- 1 The name of the Party shall be 'The Australian Labor Party'.

Objectives

- 2 The objectives of the Party are set out in the Basic Principles as determined by the National Conference. To achieve these objectives the ALP will act in accordance with the Principles of Action and Progressive Reforms set out in the Party Platform from time to time.

Head Office

- 3 The Head Office of the Party shall be known as the National Secretariat and shall be established in Centenary House, Barton, ACT or any other place determined by the National Executive from time to time.

Composition

- 4 The Party shall consist of branches in each state, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory (hereinafter referred to as state branches).

Structure of Party Organisation

- 5
 - (a) The Party shall function upon the following basis:
 - (i) National Conference
 - (ii) National Executive
 - (iii) Federal Parliamentary Labor Party (FPLP)
 - (iv) Australian Young Labor.
 - (b) The National Conference shall be the supreme governing authority of the Party and its decisions shall be binding upon every member and every section of the Party.
 - (c) The National Executive shall be the chief administrative authority of the Party, subject only to the National Conference.
 - (d) The Federal Parliamentary Labor Party shall have authority in properly constituted Caucus meetings to make decisions directed towards establishing the collective attitude of the Parliamentary Party to any question or matter in the Federal Parliament, subject to:
 - (i) at all times taking such action which may be possible to implement the Party's Platform and Conference decisions;

- (ii) on questions or matters which are not subject to National Platform or Conference or Executive decisions, the majority decision of Caucus being binding upon all members in the parliament
- (iii) no attitude being expressed which is contrary to the provisions of the Party Platform or any other decision of National Conference or National Executive.
- (e) Australian Young Labor shall function in accordance with the rules that may be approved from time to time by the National Executive and subject to its control and jurisdiction.
- (f) The National Labor Women's Network shall function in accordance with the rules that may be approved from time to time by the National Executive and subject to its control and jurisdiction.
- (g) That a National Indigenous Labor Network be formed from the state networks with appropriate support from the national office. The network's goals will be to:
 - (i) attract and support Indigenous ALP members
 - (ii) increase the involvement of Indigenous people at all levels of the ALP
 - (iii) provide a focus for the identification, training and support of Indigenous candidates
 - (iv) increase awareness of Indigenous issues throughout the ALP
 - (v) increase commitment of Party members to greater representation of Indigenous people throughout the Party
 - (vi) encourage the employment of Indigenous people in staff and Party positions.

National Conference

- 6
- (a) National Conference shall consist of 400 delegates, comprising:
 - (i) three delegates being the National President and National Vice-Presidents elected under rule 9(a)
 - (ii) four delegates being the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Party in the Senate
 - (iii) six delegates elected from and by the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party
 - (iv) delegations from each state consisting of:
 - the State Parliamentary Leader
 - a base component of 12 persons
 - a supplementary component of a number of persons equal to twice the number of House of Representatives electorates in that state as at the previous 31 December
 - (v) delegations from each territory consisting of:
 - the Territory Parliamentary Leader,
 - a base component of 2 persons,
 - a supplementary component of a number of persons equal to twice the number of House of Representatives electorates in that territory as at the previous 31 December
 - (vi) three delegates from Australian Young Labor.
 - (b) State Secretaries and members of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party who are not delegates to National Conference shall be able to attend National Conference with the rights of delegates except that of voting.
 - (c) All members of the state or territory branch shall be eligible to be elected as delegates from that state or territory.

- (d) (i) Each state shall be entitled to a minimum of two proxies up to a maximum equal to half the state's delegation.
- (ii) The credentials for state branch proxies shall be circulated in advance and accepted at the commencement of the Conference and no other proxies may be admitted.
- (iii) It is the responsibility of each state delegation to ensure that the chair is advised of all changes of delegation during the Conference. No proxy shall participate in the debate of a report in which the delegate he/she is replacing has participated.
- (iv) state and federal leaders may each nominate one proxy subject to paragraph (ii) above. Such proxies must be a member of the relevant parliamentary party.
- (e) All delegates must be elected by a system of proportional representation in a single ballot with affirmative action in accordance with rule 10.
- (f) Delegates shall be elected within 12 months prior to the date of National Conference.
- (g) State branches cannot bind delegates with regard to their vote on any issue before the National Conference.
- (h) National Conference shall be held every three years in a location determined by the National Executive which shall have the responsibility for determining the time of the National Conference.
- (i) Special National Conferences may be held for specially stated purposes and shall be called in the manner prescribed by these rules.
- (j) (i) The National President and National Vice-Presidents need not be delegates to National Conference, but have the full rights of a delegate except that of voting.
- (ii) The National Secretary shall not be a delegate to National Conference, but shall have the full rights of a delegate except that of voting.
- (k) The National Secretary, after receiving instructions from the convening authority, shall observe the following procedure for the purpose of establishing the Conference agenda:
 - (i) give the following bodies three months notice to send items to the National Policy Forum: state branches, Australian Young Labor, and federal electorate councils, Labor Action Policy Committees and trade unions whose state branches are affiliated with the Party in a majority of states in which they operate, all of which shall have the right to submit items to the National Policy Forum. Bodies so submitting items to the National Policy Forum shall be notified in writing of the forum's views on such items.
 - (ii) send to state branches and other bodies represented at National Conference, agenda and any other documents related thereto at least one month before Conference meets.
- (l) (i) The National Executive may by unanimous resolution put any motion that could be considered by a meeting of National Conference to a postal ballot of those delegates credentialled to vote at the last meeting of National Conference.
- (ii) A motion put to postal ballot is only carried if a two-thirds majority of delegates eligible to vote vote in favour.
- (iii) A resolution passed by postal ballot has the same effect as a resolution passed at a meeting of National Conference.

National Executive

- 7 (a) The National Executive of the Party, which shall be the chief administrative authority subject only to National Conference, shall be constituted in the following manner:
- (i) the National President and National Vice-Presidents, who are directly elected by Party members in accordance with rule 9(a), have the full rights of a delegate except that of voting, unless elected as a delegate in their own right
 - (ii) 20 executive members elected by the National Conference
 - (iii) the National Secretary, who shall be elected by the National Conference, shall not be a delegate but shall have the full rights of a delegate except that of voting
 - (iv) the Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party or proxy nominated by the Leader. Such proxy must be a member of the Federal Parliamentary Party
 - (v) State Secretaries who are not delegates to the National Executive shall be able to attend National Executive meetings with the rights of delegates except that of voting
 - (vi) delegates shall be entitled to nominate their proxy for any meeting or part of a meeting that they are unable to attend and for any ballot in which they are unable to vote.
- (b) (i) The terms of all those elected by the National Conference shall commence at the conclusion of the National Conference at which they are elected. They shall be subject to re-election at each Conference except the National Secretary who shall be subject to re-election at every second Conference.
- (ii) Casual vacancies will be filled by the National Executive in accordance with the principles of proportional representation.
 - (iii) Casual vacancies for the positions of National President, National Vice-Presidents and National Secretary shall be filled by a ballot of the National Executive and the National Executive Committee shall institute procedures to hold a ballot.

Powers and duties of the National Executive

- (c) Decisions of the National Executive are binding on all sections and members of the ALP subject only to appeal to National Conference. Pending the hearing of any appeal, the decision of the National Executive continues to operate.
- (d) Subject only to National Conference, the National Executive may exercise all powers of the Party on its behalf without limitation, including in relation to the state branches and other sections of the Party.
- (e) Without limiting the plenary powers of the National Executive under rule 7(d), the National Executive:
 - (i) is the administrative authority of the Party responsible for:
 - carrying out the decisions of National Conference
 - interpreting the National Constitution, the National Platform and decisions of National Conference
 - directing federal members
 - (ii) must convene triennial National Conferences in accordance with these Rules
 - (iii) may convene Special National Conferences for specified purposes

- (iv) must convene a Special National Conference for a specified purpose when requested by a majority of state branches
- (v) must elect a National Executive Committee and appoint twenty trade union representatives to the National Policy Forum
- (vi) may elect such other committees as it may determine from time to time
- (vii) must consider any matter submitted to it by a state branch, Australian Young Labor, the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party or a trade union whose state branches are affiliated with the Party in a majority of states in which it operates (in this rule 'affiliated organisation')
- (viii) may hear and decide appeals from any affiliated organisation or individual member against a decision of a state branch alleged to be inconsistent with any national decision or matter
- (ix) may hear and decide appeals by any person seeking to be a candidate for a federal election against a decision of a state branch affecting that person's preselection.
- (f) Without limiting the plenary powers of the National Executive under rule 7(d), if in the opinion of the National Executive any state branch or section of the Party is acting or has acted in a manner contrary to the National Constitution, the National Platform or a decision of National Conference, as interpreted by the National Executive, the National Executive may:
 - (i) overrule the state branch or section
 - (ii) intervene in the state branch or section, and take over and direct the conduct of its affairs
 - (iii) conduct any preselection that would otherwise have been decided by the state branch or section.
- (g) The National Executive must meet at least three times each year. Subject to the National Executive, the National Executive Committee is responsible for convening meetings of the National Executive.
- (h) (i) The National Executive may meet by telephone and other electronic means provided each member who wishes to participate in the meeting is able to clearly and simultaneously communicate with every other such member.
- (ii) A resolution agreed to in writing by all voting members of the National Executive has the same effect as a resolution passed at a meeting of the National Executive. In this rule 'writing' includes emails, faxes and other electronic means of representing or reproducing words in a visible form.
- (iii) The National Executive may conduct elections by postal vote.

National Executive Committee

8

- (a) The National Executive Committee (NEC) shall consist of the National Secretary and such other members of the National Executive as may be elected by the National Executive.
- (b) The National Executive Committee shall be responsible for the administration of the Party between meetings of the National Executive.
- (c) They shall meet at least once between each two meetings of the National Executive for the purpose of preparing the agenda and making recommendations to expedite the business of the National Executive.
- (d) Other than in urgent situations which preclude either a special meeting or a resolution without meeting of the National Executive, the NEC shall not have the power to make decisions on behalf of the National Executive.

- (e) Any actions taken by the NEC between Executive meetings shall be reported to the next meeting of the Executive for endorsement.
- (f) The non-parliamentary members of the NEC shall also be members of the companies John Curtin House Limited and ALP Legacies and Gifts.
- (g) Rules 7(d)(i) and (ii) apply to the NEC in the same way as the National Executive.

National President and National Vice-Presidents

- 9
- (a) The National President and 2 National Vice-Presidents must be directly elected from and by Party members in the 12 months before each triennial National Conference in a single ballot by proportional representation with affirmative action in accordance with rule 10.
 - (b) The candidate first elected is National President, the candidate second elected is National Senior Vice President, and the candidate third elected is National Junior Vice President. The term of office for each position starts at the commencement of National Conference, and ends at the commencement of the next triennial National Conference.
 - (c) The National President, when available, will chair National Conference and meetings of the National Executive, and conduct such meetings in accordance with the National Conference Standing Orders. The National President will carry out any other duties referred by the National Executive.
 - (d) The National Vice-Presidents in order of seniority will take the chair in the absence of the National President, and carry out any other duties referred by the National Executive.

Affirmative action

- 10
- The ALP is committed to men and women in the Party working in equal partnership. It is our objective to have equal numbers of men and women at all levels in the Party organisation, and in public office positions the Party holds. To achieve this the Party adopts a comprehensive affirmative action model of 40:40:20, as set out below, whereby a minimum of 40 per cent of relevant positions shall be held by either gender.

Party positions

- (a) All elections, other than public office preselections, conducted by national and state level Party units for three or more positions, shall comply with the affirmative action model. Not less than 40 per cent of such positions shall be held by women, and not less than 40 per cent by men, provided that sufficient candidates of the relevant gender nominate ('the basic entitlement'). If the calculation to determine the basic entitlement results in a fraction of one half or more then the basic entitlement shall be the next higher whole number, and where it results in a fraction of less than one half it shall be the next lower number.

Union delegations

- (b) Union delegations to Party conferences and forums shall comply with the affirmative action model. Not less than 40 per cent of a union's delegation shall be women, and not less than 40 per cent shall be men ('the minimum representation'). Provided that if the level of male or female membership of a union is less than 40 per cent, the minimum representation shall be set at that level.

Public office preselection

- (c) Preselections for public office positions at a state and federal level shall comply with the affirmative action model in this rule 10(c).

PRINCIPLES

- (i) The intention of this rule is to produce an outcome where not less than 40 per cent of seats held by Labor will be filled by women, and not less than 40 per cent by men ('the minimum target').
- (ii) This minimum target shall apply to any preselection round taking place after 1 January 2012.
- (iii) The remaining 20 per cent of the seats held by Labor may be filled by candidates of either gender.

IMPLEMENTATION

- (iv) State and territory branches shall be required to amend their rules so as to achieve the minimum target by applying these principles to the relevant seats.
- (v) For the purposes of paragraph (iv), the relevant seats shall include:
 - in relation to lower houses, those seats needed to form government, or those seats held by Labor, whichever is the greater; and
 - in relation to upper houses, at least 50 per cent of seats in the upper house, or those seats held by Labor, whichever is the greater.
- (d) The National Executive shall have the responsibility and the power to enforce rules 10(a)–(c) generally and specifically to determine the outcome in any public office preselection progressively between now and the year 2012 in order to ensure that this rule is complied with.
- (e) Each state and territory branch must no later than 1 November each year provide a report to its Administrative Committee or State Executive and to the National Executive on the implementation of rules 10(a)–(c).
- (f) Each state and territory branch must ensure that its rules are consistent with this rule, and are submitted to the National Executive for approval by 1 November 2003. Transitional Provisions—Former Rule 12 to Continue to Apply.
- (g) Any preselection round held after the date this rule is adopted by National Conference, but prior to 1 January 2012, shall comply with the provisions of rule 12 as it was immediately prior to the adoption of this rule ("the former rule"), except that the references in the former rule to the year 2002 shall be read as references to the year 2011.

National Labor Women's Network

Membership

- 11 (a) (i) There will be a National Labor Women's Network.
- (ii) Every woman member of the Party is automatically a member of the National Labor Women's Network.
- (iii) There will be no membership fee at the national level

Role of the NLWN

- (b) The role of the National Labor Women's Network is:
- (i) to encourage women to join and participate in the Australian Labor Party
 - (ii) to increase the numbers of women in the Party
 - (iii) to maintain and expand e-communication between Labor women
 - (iv) to devise and promote training programs to improve the skills, confidence and participation of Labor women throughout the ALP
 - (v) to sponsor and expand the NLWN political work experience program
 - (vi) to develop and promote women within branches and other structures of the ALP as well as to elected office
 - (vii) to organise, in conjunction with the host state or territory, the National Labor Women's Conferences
 - (viii) to administer travel subsidy to the National Labor Women's Conferences
 - (ix) to promote contact between the ALP and women's organisations in the community
 - (x) to assist in the development of policy and ensure women participate in policy making
 - (xi) to nominate representatives to women's forums, including international women's forums.

National Executive

- (c) (i) The NLWN Executive will consist of 15 women members of the ALP elected by each triennial National Conference in a single ballot by proportional representation, but so that at least one candidate elected is from each state and territory (in so far as there are nominations from each state and territory).
- (ii) At its first meeting after each triennial National Conference, the NLWN Executive will elect from its members a Convenor, Deputy Convenor, Secretary and any other officers it thinks appropriate. The Convenor and Deputy Convenor will be elected in a single ballot. The NLWN Executive may fill vacancies in officer positions from its members.
- (iii) The National Executive may fill vacancies in the membership of the NLWN Executive in accordance with the principles of proportional representation and state and territory representation in rule 11(c)(i).
- (iv) Women members of the ALP National Executive and the Federal Minister or Shadow Minister for the Status of Women shall be ex-officio members of the NLWN Executive.
- (v) Nominees for the NLWN Executive do not have to be delegates to the National Conference at which they are elected.

- (vi) Members of the NLWN Executive shall be able to nominate their proxy for NLWN Executive meetings.
- (vii) The NLWN Executive will provide an annual report of its activities to the National Executive, state and territory branches and state and territory women's organisations.
- (viii) The NLWN Executive will meet monthly by telephone and twice a year, face to face, with travel funded through the National Secretariat.
- (ix) Accounts and financing will be run through the National Secretariat, within an annual budget, allocated by the National Executive.

State women's groups and interaction

- (d) (i) The NLWN will coordinate contact with state and territory branches of the Labor Women's Network, other Labor women's organisations and women's contact officers.
- (ii) The NLWN will regularly meet with state and territory representatives of the LWN by telephone conference.
- (iii) The structure of state and territory Labor Women's Networks will be determined by each state and territory although uniformity is desirable.
- (iv) The NLWN will continue to develop materials, share programs and information to assist and support state LWNs. Transitional Provision(e) That the current term of the LWN Executive be extended to the next National Conference, and the Executive expanded to 10 members to ensure representation by all states and territories.

Finance

- 12
- (a) To meet the general expenses of the Party, each state branch shall pay each year, to the National Executive through the National Secretary, a sum representing a rate per thousand adult members, and a rate per thousand pensioner and student/junior members. The total due shall be paid in four quarterly instalments on 1 January, 1 April, 1 July and 1 October. The National Executive shall have the power to fix sustentation fees.
 - (b) In the event of a state branch being six months in arrears in its contributions to the Party, the National Executive may decide that such branch shall not be entitled to be represented at any meeting of the National Executive or National Conference, or be consulted on any question that may be subject to a ballot of state branches, until such arrears are paid.
 - (c) Upon request, state and territory branches shall report financial information to the National Secretary in a standard format determined by the National Executive.
 - (d) The National Executive shall determine an annual budget for travel costs and administer an equalisation pool for such costs associated with National Conferences and the National Executive.
 - (e) The National Executive shall meet the expenses of the National President attending National Conference and the expenses of any officers associated with any duty being carried out on behalf of the National Executive.
 - (f) Each branch shall pay to the National Executive not later than 31 December of each year the appropriate fee, to be determined by the National Executive, for international affiliations or activities associated therewith.

- (g) The National Executive shall authorise the National Secretary to negotiate banking facilities on behalf of the National Executive of the Party and determine the manner in which the Party's accounts shall be operated including the signatories to the Party's bank accounts.
- (h) Fundraising by the Labor Party at state, territory and national levels and by the Labor Party candidates for public office shall be governed by the ALP Code of Conduct for Fundraising as approved by the National Executive.
- (i) All accounts conducted for candidates whether at Commonwealth, state or municipal elections shall include the Australian Labor Party in their title. Furthermore, they shall be controlled by that level of Party organisation with the identical relevant signatories, be audited at the July meeting of such Party organisations and such annual accounts shall be forwarded to the Party state branch for inclusion in the Party's annual account reporting process to the Australian Electoral Commission.

National Policy Forum

Objectives

- 13 (a) The National Policy Forum has the following objectives:
- (i) to facilitate policy debate and development amongst the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, Party members and affiliates
 - (ii) to provide a framework for the partnership between the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party and the wider labour movement
 - (iii) to provide guidance on the causes and aspirations of the modern Labor movement
 - (iv) to oversee the National Secretariat's policy initiatives
 - (v) to include Party units, Party members and affiliates in the debate on the direction of the Party
 - (vi) to maintain the relevance of the National Platform by conducting reviews
 - (vii) to take into account all policy resolutions passed by state and territory conferences
 - (viii) to undertake long-term planning for the implementation of Labor policy
 - (ix) to provide leadership on matters of public concern and interest.

Membership

- (b) The National Policy Forum consists of the following voting members:
- (i) the National President and Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, who are co-chairs
 - (ii) two Deputy Chairs, elected by National Conference
 - (iii) one Secretary, elected by National Conference
 - (iv) the National Secretary
 - (v) two Assistant National Secretaries, appointed by the National Secretary
 - (vi) the President of Australian Young Labor
 - (vii) twenty federal members of parliament, including representatives from the Cabinet and Ministry, elected at the beginning of each federal parliamentary term by the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party according to the principles of proportional representation ('MPs and Senators')

- (viii) twenty people who are financial members of an affiliated union and financial Party members, elected every three years by the National Executive according to the principles of proportional representation ('trade union representatives'), and
- (ix) twenty financial Party members, each of whom is a member of a local branch, elected every three years
- (x) according to the principles of proportional representation by Party members with one year of continuous financial membership prior to the date of calling for nominations ('rank and file representatives'). The twenty rank and file representatives are to be divided amongst the state and territory branches in the following way:
 - (i) any state or territory that has less than five per cent of House of Representatives electorates is allocated one rank and file representative
 - (ii) any state or territory that has less than ten per cent but greater than or equal to five per cent of House of Representatives electorates is allocated two rank and file representatives
 - (iii) the remaining rank and file representatives are allocated to the remaining states and territories according to the relative proportion of House of Representatives electorates in those states and territories.
- (c) Only Party members who live in the state or territory for which rank and file representatives are being elected may vote in a ballot to select rank and file representatives for that state or territory.
- (d) Each state and territory branch must determine the ballot method for electing rank and file representatives in its jurisdiction.
- (e) The rank and file representatives for each state and territory must be elected separately, in a single ballot for each state and territory branch.
- (f) The National Policy Forum members elected under subsections (b)(vii), (b)(viii), and (b)(ix) must consist of at least 40 per cent women and at least 40 per cent men in accordance with the principles in Rules B.10(a) and (b). If these requirements are not met, the Returning Officer must adjust the selection result under subsection (b)(ix) to give effect to these requirements.
- (g) State and territory branches may require that at least 40 per cent of their rank and file representatives are enrolled in an electorate that is not 'inner metropolitan' as defined by the AEC.
- (h) If there is a tied vote in the National Policy Forum, the Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party has the casting vote.
- (i) The National Policy Forum may co-opt any person as an ex-officio non-voting member of the forum as a whole or a policy commission.

Responsibilities

- (j) The National Policy Forum is responsible for:
 - (i) keeping our platform relevant by conducting Platform Reviews
 - (ii) leading Party debates by forming policy commissions
 - (iii) providing advice to the National Conference and National Executive on any matter of policy.
- (k) The National Policy Forum must:
 - (i) maintain a quorum of a majority of members in order to meet
 - (ii) meet at least three times per year
 - (iii) hold at least one meeting outside a capital city each year
 - (iv) decide which of its meetings, or parts of meetings, are open to the wider Party, general public and media.

Platform reviews

- (l) During each Federal Parliamentary term, the National Policy Forum must undertake a complete review of the National Platform, and recommend platform amendments to the National Conference.
- (m) The National Policy Forum must involve Caucus Committees in any review of the sections of the platform that fall within their policy areas.

Policy commissions

- (n) The National Policy Forum may at any time form a Policy Commission to consider matters referred to it by the:
 - (i) Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party
 - or
 - (ii) National Executive.
- (o) Policy commissions must consist of nine voting members from the National Policy Forum. Three of the members of a policy commission must be MPs or Senators, three must be trade union representatives, and three must be rank and file representatives.
- (p) The members of a policy commission must be elected by a ballot of the whole National Policy Forum.
- (q) A policy commission's membership must satisfy affirmative action requirements. If these requirements are not met, the Returning Officer must adjust the election result to give effect to these requirements.
- (r) Policy commissions must elect two co-chairs from amongst their nine members. One of the co-chairs must be an MP or Senator, and one must be a rank and file representative.
- (s) The National Policy Forum may appoint other Party members as non-voting members of a policy commission.
- (t) The policy commission may issue a majority and minority report to the National Policy Forum.
- (u) Any report or recommendation of a policy commission must be considered and decided upon by the National Policy Forum before being transmitted to the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party and/or the National Conference for approval.

Resources

- (v) The National Secretary may appoint a National Policy Forum Co-ordinator to provide administrative support to the National Policy Forum.
- (w) The National Executive must allocate the National Policy Forum a budget each year that includes funding for editorial support. The Secretary of the National Policy Forum must administer the National Policy Forum's budget.
- (x) To the extent that they are applicable, the National Policy Forum must operate according to the standing orders and procedures of the National Conference.
- (y) The National Policy Forum may adopt procedures to assist in fulfilling its objectives and responsibilities, so long as they are not inconsistent with any express provisions of the National Constitution.

Federal Parliamentary Labor Party

- 14
- (a) No state branch may direct or discipline members of the FPLP in regard to matters affecting the National Platform or policy or upon legislation before the parliament or any matters the subject of consideration by the FPLP.
 - (b) The power of direction, advice and/or guidance is reserved for the National Conference and between conferences, the National Executive.

Membership recruitment

- 15
- (a) It is an abuse of Party rules for an individual or group/s to fund Party membership for other individuals or groups of individuals who would otherwise be unwilling to pay their own subscriptions.
 - (b) It is an abuse of Party rules for an individual or group/s to encourage reduced-rate membership to people that may not be eligible for that category of membership.
 - (c) It is an abuse of Party rules for an individual or group/s to recruit members who do not live at the claimed addresses in an attempt to gain advantage at local Party meetings or the outcome of Party ballots.
 - (d) It is a requirement of Party rules that members either correctly enrol with the Australian Electoral Commission to vote in a federal election at their stated address, or not be eligible to do so because they are under 18 years of age or not an Australian citizen. If members are enrolled to vote, and they join a branch, sub-branch or other party body that has specific geographic coverage under state or territory branch rules, they must do so using the address at which they are enrolled to vote.
 - (e) Applicants must personally apply for membership by:
 - (i) Signing their own membership application and organising to post the form back to the state or territory branch office with the membership fee
 - or
 - (ii) Signing their own membership application and personally attending the state or territory branch office to submit the application and pay the membership fee
 - or
 - (iii) If their state or territory branch rules currently permit, signing their own membership application and arranging a person to attend the state or territory branch office on their behalf to submit the application and their membership fee (identification is necessary)
 - or
 - (iv) Completing an application form online and paying their membership fee by electronic funds transfer from their personal account, or with their personal credit card
 - or
 - (v) If their state or territory branch rules permit, personally attending their local branch meeting and paying their membership fee to the Secretary during the meeting. The money must be receipted to the member and the member's attendance recorded in any attendance book. The Secretary must forward the money to the state or territory branch office along with the signed application form.

- (f) Members must personally renew their membership by:
 - (i) any of the means in subsection (e)
 - or
 - (ii) by phone using their personal credit card
 - or
 - (iii) by signing a standing authority for the renewal of their membership and payment of their membership fees by electronic funds transfer from their personal account, or with their personal credit card.
- (g) Notwithstanding subsection (f), a person's membership may also be renewed by a family member resident in the same household.
- (h) Members who apply for membership by completing an application form online must not receive voting rights in any election unless:
 - (i) they vote in person, with proof of address and photo ID
 - (ii) they comply with the maximum possible relevant state or territory eligibility requirement for 'length of membership', in order to give effect to the principle that no member who applies online may receive voting rights for any election in a shorter period than any member who applies through a local branch
 - (iii) they comply with the relevant state or territory eligibility requirement for 'branch attendance' if the election is for Party Conference delegates or candidates for public office.
- (i) In order to prevent the 'bulk renewal' of other members, the National Executive must prescribe membership application and renewal forms for use by all state and territory branches that:
 - (i) require the signature of the applicant or member authorising the application or renewal
 - (ii) contain a declaration by any applicant or member paying a reduced-rate subscription that they are entitled to that reduced rate. The declaration must also indicate the basis on which the member is claiming this entitlement. state or territory branches may also set standard requirements of evidence to be met by members claiming this entitlement.
- (j) All state and territory branches must implement an appropriate cap or limitation/ review procedure relating to the number of members that may validly apply to join the ALP at a local branch or sub-branch meeting. Members who seek to transfer into a branch or sub-branch shall be included/ counted for the purposes of determining the number of members to which the cap or limitation applies.
- (k) Involvement in such abuses will be considered as behaviour likely to bring the Party into disrepute and will result in disciplinary action which may include expulsion under the rules of the Party.
- (l) All state and territory branch rules must, where necessary, establish a tribunal to effectively resolve disputes concerning membership. All state dispute tribunals will operate according to due process and according to the national membership principles and rules.
- (m) All state and territory branch rules must contain a procedure that permits a decision to admit a person as a Party member to be reviewed, where there is an allegation that the person was ineligible to become a Party member.
- (n) All state and territory branch rules must permit 50 members or 25 per cent of the members in a federal electorate, whichever is the lesser, to petition the Administrative Committee or State Executive to investigate any allegations of breaches of this rule in that electorate.
- (o) In order to ensure that these rules are given effect, the state and territory branches of ALP be required to amend, where necessary, their rules to reflect these national rules. Such amended rules will be presented to the National Executive no later than 1 November 2003.

- (p) The National Executive must continue: (i) to monitor and enforce compliance with this rule; and (ii) to review the operation of this rule to ensure the integrity of the Party's membership processes.
- (q) All states and territory branches must provide to the National Executive a complete current branch membership list by no later than 31 July of each year.

National Life Membership

- 16
- (a) The National Executive can award national life membership of the Australian Labor Party.
 - (b) Nominees for national life membership must be longstanding members of the Party and have provided distinguished service to the Party at a national level.
 - (c) Only the National Executive, state branches, federal electorate bodies and nationally affiliated unions can make nominations for national life membership. Nominations should describe the background and history of service of the nominee particularly their contribution at a national level.
 - (d) Nominations for national life membership must be forwarded to the National Secretary at least one month prior to a meeting of the National Executive.
 - (e) National life membership shall only be awarded with the unanimous support of the National Executive.

Australian Labor Advisory Council

- 17
- (a) There will be an Australian Labor Advisory Council (ALAC), consisting of the Leader and senior members of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, the National President and National Secretary or their nominees, and representatives of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.
 - (b) The role of ALAC will be to provide a formal consultative mechanism between the Party and the union movement.
 - (c) The National Policy Forum must consult with ALAC in relation to Party policy relevant to ALAC's role, and resolutions of ALAC relevant to Party policy must be considered by the National Policy Forum.
 - (d) ALAC must meet at least twice each year, the meetings to be resourced by the National Secretariat.
 - (e) ALAC will include a Campaigns and Growth Forum based on the ACTU model, to connect affiliated unions, the Party and the FPLP into a more meaningful dialogue on shared challenges.

National Appeals Tribunal

- 18
- (a) The National Executive must:
 - (i) at its first meeting after each triennial National Conference, and
 - (ii) whenever there is a vacancy in a position; by a three-quarters majority of all voting members appoint three persons to form the panel for the National Appeals Tribunal.
 - (b) A member of the panel may only be removed by a three-quarters majority of all voting members of the National Executive.

- (c) In respect of each appeal, the tribunal is constituted by a member of the panel determined by lot under the supervision of the National Secretary.
- (d) The tribunal is responsible on behalf of the National Executive for hearing all appeals by members, affiliated unions and constituent units of the Party that relate to:
 - (i) compliance with the National Constitution
 - or
 - (ii) enforcement of the rights and obligations of members, affiliated unions and constituent units under the National Constitution; and making recommendations to the National Executive in relation to those appeals.
- (e) No appeal may be heard by the tribunal until all practicable avenues of appeal have been exhausted under the rules of the relevant state or territory branch.
- (f) The tribunal must:
 - (i) comply with the rules of procedural fairness in conducting hearings
 - (ii) (subject to paragraph (i)) conduct its hearings as expeditiously as possible
 - (iii) give the National Executive and all parties to the appeal written reasons for its recommendations.
- (g) The National Executive:
 - (i) must promptly consider all recommendations of the tribunal
 - (ii) may make any decision in relation to the appeal it thinks fit.
- (h) The tribunal:
 - (i) must prescribe guidelines for the conduct of appeals, including the granting of leave by the tribunal to hear appeals; and
 - (ii) may otherwise regulate its own procedure; subject to these rules and any direction of the National Executive.
- (i) In this rule 'National Constitution' has the same meaning as in rule 19.
- (j) The powers of the National Executive under this rule are in addition to, and not in derogation from, those contained in rule 7(c).

National Constitution not enforceable in law

- 19
- (a) In this rule 'National Constitution' means all national constituent instruments of the Party, and includes the national Objectives and Principles, the national Rules, the National Principles of Organisation, and all resolutions of National Conference and the National Executive relating to the structure and organisation of the Party.
 - (b) It is intended that the National Constitution and everything done in connection with it, all arrangements relating to it (whether express or implied) and any agreement or business entered into or payment made or under the National Constitution, will not bring about any legal relationship, rights, duties or outcome of any kind, or be enforceable by law, or be the subject of legal proceedings. Instead all arrangements, agreements and business are only binding in honour.
 - (c) Without limiting rule 19(b), it is further expressly intended that all disputes within the Party, or between one member and another that relate to the Party be resolved in accordance with the National Constitution and the rules of the state and territory branches and not through legal proceedings.
 - (d) By joining the Party and remaining members, all members of the Party consent to be bound by this rule.

Establishment of Implementation Committee

- 20
- (a) The National Executive will establish an Implementation Committee to determine how to implement Recommendation 77 of the National Review 2010 that the structure of the National Conference be changed to enable the increased participation of rank and file members through direct election of a component of the National Conference. The Implementation Committee will have regard to the 2010 National Review, the National Principles of Organisation, and state and territory arrangements.
 - (b) The National Executive will determine the composition and reporting arrangements of the Implementation Committee.
 - (c) The report of the Implementation Committee referred to in subsection (a) must be determined by the National Executive by a three quarters majority of all voting members no later than 3 December 2012.

Part C—National Principles of Organisation

- 1 Policy at the national, state and territory level shall be determined by the national, state and territory conferences respectively. Such decisions shall be binding on every member and every section of the Party, or of the relevant state or territory branch.
- 2 Federal, state and territory ministers must report back to their respective Party Conferences on the implementation of platform and policy commitments.
- 3 On matters that are not subject to National Platform or Conference or Executive decisions, or their state and territory equivalents, the majority decision of the relevant Parliamentary Labor Party shall be binding upon all members of the parliament.
- 4 In all parliaments, the parliamentary leadership, the Ministry and Shadow Ministry shall be elected by the Parliamentary Labor Party.

Election of delegates to National Conference

- 5 State and territory branch delegates to National Conference (including proxy delegates) must be elected in accordance with the rules of that state or territory branch, subject to rule 6.

Composition of state conferences

- 6
 - (a) In all states the state conference shall comprise 50 per cent union representatives and 50 per cent constituency Party representatives. (This shall not bind territory branches until the proportion of unions affiliated is equivalent to that in the states. This principle shall apply to all state level Party units comprised of direct representatives of unions and constituency units.)
 - (b) State branches should increase or maintain the size of state conferences, which should have greater rank and file involvement.

Membership

- 7
 - (a) Membership of the ALP is open to all residents of Australia who are prepared to accept its objectives and who have associations with no other political party or proscribed organisation. This right to join shall not be impaired other than in circumstances in which it can be demonstrated clearly that an individual cannot meet the requirement outlined above.
 - (b) Members of the Party are encouraged to be members of a union or to employ union labour. State and Territory branch rules should require members of the Party to be members of a union or to employ union labour to the maximum extent permitted by law.
 - (c) To further encourage union members to join the Party, state and territory branches should offer discounts in membership subscriptions for members of affiliated unions.

Affiliation of unions

- 8
 - (a) All bona fide unions shall have the right to affiliate to the ALP. This right to affiliate shall not be impaired unless it can be demonstrated clearly that the relevant organisation is not a bona fide union or that the organisation has engaged in conduct that renders it unsuitable to be affiliated.
 - (b) For the purposes of calculating union delegation sizes and affiliation fees, the number of members of each affiliated union must be determined each year by an independent audit by a registered auditor of:
 - (i) the number of members eligible to vote in a ballot for an office in that union at 30 June as conducted by the appropriate Electoral Commission/s
 - (ii) the number of members identified in paragraph (i) above for whom the union received an amount of dues in relation to the period between 1 April and 30 June inclusive for that year.
 - (c) Each affiliated union must by 4.00 pm on the last Friday in February each year provide to the State or Territory branch in a sealed envelope:
 - (i) the independent audit report for the previous year
 - (ii) advice on the number of members that union will affiliate on for the current year, and all such sealed envelopes must be opened at the same time in the presence of scrutineers appointed by affiliated unions.
 - (d) Union delegation sizes must be based on the three year rolling average of that union's affiliation for the current and two preceding years (except that affiliation figures before 2002 must not be used to determine a union's rolling average).
 - (e) Each state and territory branch (other than the Queensland Branch) must amend its rules to implement clauses 7(b)–(d) above in accordance with the model adopted by the National Executive for the Queensland Branch on 12 April 2002.
- 9 Each State and Territory branch should develop an equitable basis of determining union entitlement for representation at relevant state level Party units. This shall not prevent state branches making reasonable special arrangements for the representation of small unions.

Union delegations

- 10 Subject to rule 10(b), it shall be the right of each union to determine the criteria and procedures for selection of its delegates, subject to those delegates being financial members of that union and of the Party.

State and territory Labor advisory councils

- 11
 - (a) Labor Advisory Council (LAC), consisting of the Leader and senior members of the state or territory Parliamentary Labor Party, the state or territory President and Secretary or their nominees, and representatives of the Trades and Labour Council or equivalent body in that state or territory.
 - (b) The role of the LAC will be to provide a formal consultative mechanism between the Party and the union movement in that state or territory.
 - (c) The LAC will include a Campaigns and Growth Forum based on the ACTU model, to connect affiliated unions, the Party and the SPLP into a more meaningful dialogue on shared challenges.

Dialogue with local union activists

- 12 All Labor MPs must establish dialogue with local union activists in their electorates, including frequent meetings with those union activists who work in their area. Senators and MLCs must be invited to attend such meetings.

Members' rights

- 13 The following are to be established as minimum standards:
- (a) The process of joining the Party shall be simplified and all unnecessary impediments to that process shall be removed from state and territory branch rules.
 - (b) Subject to any attendance requirements in the state or territory, full membership rights in all states and territories shall begin to accrue in accordance with the relevant state or territory requirements and those rights shall accumulate, to a maximum, following two years consecutive membership. These rights include: being eligible for preselection; standing and voting for or standing on, the various Party bodies and executives.
 - (c) Each state and territory branch must adopt rules that establish an appeals process in relation to compliance with and enforcement of branch rules by members, affiliated unions and constituent units of the branch, such rules to be submitted to the National Executive for approval by 1 November 2003. The appeals process must include compliance with the rules of procedural fairness, expedited hearings and written reasons for decision.

Organisation and training

- 14
- (a) In addition to geographically based local branches within state and federal electorates, state and territory branches should consider different forms of rank and file organisation, such as:
 - (i) occupation, workplace and employment related branches
 - (ii) university and TAFE campus branches
 - (iii) policy forums (including online forums)
 - (iv) Labor policy action caucuses or equivalent policy structures
 - (b) The number of local branches in metropolitan areas should be consolidated to provide for larger meetings and better branch organisation.
 - (c) MPs and state and territory branches should respond to branch correspondence promptly so that branch members know their contribution has been considered.
 - (d) State and territory branches should ask branches to nominate either a women's officer or contact person to assist the development of equitable participation for women in the Party.
 - (e) MPs and state and territory branches should respond to correspondence from Party members and Party units promptly, so that Party members know their contribution has been considered. Before visiting an electorate, ministers and shadow ministers should notify the relevant Party units in that area.
 - (f) State and territory branches should form supporters clubs, and explore the possibility of the creation of an associate class of membership as a way of broadening involvement in the Party.
 - (g) Labor Connect should be expanded as a membership organising and campaigning tool and as a means for members to contribute to and participate in Party policy development

Central policy branches

- 15
- (a) State and territory branches may establish central policy branches or forums in capital cities and major regional centres.
 - (b) The National Secretariat should assist central policy branches by providing lectures, presentations and seminars online for Party members.

State and territory policy forums

- 16
- (a) State and territory branches should model their policy committees on the National Policy Forum to the extent that they should incorporate:
 - (i) a formal parliamentary component
 - (ii) a trade union affiliate component
 - (iii) a link to grass-roots members and grass-roots policy structures.
 - (b) All Party members should be eligible to attend state and territory policy committee meetings to contribute specialised knowledge and expertise on policy issues. Policy committees should, where feasible, conduct forums and consultations in regional centres.
 - (c) Resolutions passed by Party units should be circulated to the relevant ministers and shadow ministers, state and territory policy committees and the National Policy Forum for consideration and response.

Policy development

Online branches

- 17
- (a) The National Secretariat should establish a National Online Policy Branch.
 - (b) Attendance at the National Online Policy Branch does not satisfy attendance requirements for voting in Party elections, unless a state or territory branch's rules expressly provide that it does.

Grass roots policy structures

- (c) State and territory branches must investigate new grass-roots policy structures.
- (d) State and territory branches are encouraged to provide for the establishment of a 'Labor Policy Action Caucus' or 'Labor PAC' where a group has:
 - (i) thirty financial Party members (or some other number as determined by the relevant state and territory branch)
 - (ii) a patron from both the state and federal parliamentary caucuses, unless otherwise determined by its Administrative Committee
 - (iii) a statement of its name, objectives and rules, approved by its Administrative Committee.
- (e) Labor PACs should enjoy the same level of support from state and territory branch offices that constituent units enjoy in that state or territory. In particular, they should be permitted to:
 - (i) promote policy forums in Party publications and bulletins
 - (ii) put motions directly to Party conferences, the National Policy Forum, and state and territory branch policy committees
 - (iii) convene meetings and functions.

- (f) Labor PACs should in no way supplant local branches, many of which continue to provide Labor with a vital link to their communities. Rather, Labor PACs should be a complementary initiative. No powers or resources should be given to Labor PACs that are not also given to local branches.
- (g) Party officials should support these new arrangements. As PACs mature and become part of the party's structures, party officials should:
 - (i) list Labor PACs on application forms for membership (so new members can sign up to them immediately)
 - (ii) provide administrative support for elections and the maintenance of membership lists, as they do for local branches.
- (h) The administrative, financial and fundraising regimes that govern Labor PACs should be determined by each state and territory branch.

Engagement between MPs and members

- (i) Except in an election year, ministers and shadow ministers should participate in at least three of any of the official policy engagements each year that are attended by 30 or more Party members or affiliated union members. Of these:
 - (i) at least one should be in a non-metropolitan area,
 - (ii) at least one should be online
 - (iii) for federal ministers or shadow ministers, at least one should be outside their home state or territory.

Preselections

- 18
- (a) Any member who meets the membership eligibility requirements shall be entitled to participate in voting for a candidate in any preselection covered by the applicable boundaries within which they reside, subject to clause 15(c).
 - (b) The only residential boundaries that can affect that right are those devised by either federal, state or municipal electoral commissions. That is, the entitlement is guaranteed by the publicly known and independently drawn boundaries of respective electoral commissions. Therefore, if you live within the respective electorate and meet other criteria within the rules you are eligible to vote in the preselection.
 - (c) To ensure the integrity of preselection ballots, no member shall receive a vote in any preselection unless that member is correctly enrolled with the Australian Electoral Commission to vote in a federal election. The member's address for the purposes of preselection will be their enrolled address.
 - (d) In order to ensure that candidates and MPs fulfil local responsibilities, state and territory branches should:
 - (i) develop a system for reporting the activities of MPs to their federal electorate bodies
 - (ii) introduce Public Office Selection Forums for all lower house candidates.
All eligible voters and financial Party members who live in the electorate for which a lower house candidate is being selected should be eligible to attend and participate in a Public Office Selection Forum.
Public Office Selection Forums should be held on the day of voting. They should consist of formal speeches by the candidates and small group question and answer sessions.

Community preselections

- 19
 - (a) State and territory branches may trial community selection ballots when selecting lower house candidates.
 - (b) Australian Labor:
 - (i) recognises that each state and territory branch will approach preselections differently
 - (ii) supports state and territory branches that undertake a trial of community selection ballots when selecting candidates
 - (iii) asks state and territory branches that undertake community selection ballots to report to the National Executive on the outcome of the trial.
 - (c) To vote in a community selection ballot, any person who is not a financial Party member, must be correctly enrolled in that electorate, and must first sign a declaration stating that they:
 - (i) are a Labor supporter
 - (ii) are not a member of another political party or one of its affiliated organisations.
 - (d) State and territory branches should determine the model and procedures to be used in any community selection ballot in their jurisdiction.

Australian Young Labor

- 20 Every state and territory Administrative Committee or State Executive should consider co-opting a non-voting member or members of Young Labor.

Indigenous Labor Network

- 21 That each state and territory branch form an Indigenous Labor Network. Membership should be open to all Indigenous people who are members of the ALP. Non-Indigenous ALP members can nominate to be associate members.

Implementation of National Principles of Organisation

- 22 The National Executive will monitor the implementation of these National Principles of Organisation in consultation with the state and territory branches. These principles will apply equally to all state and territory branches unless otherwise stated.

State and territory branch rule changes

- 23 All state and territory branch rules must be revised in accordance with these National Principles of Organisation as amended at the National Conference held in December 2011, and be submitted to the National Executive for endorsement no later than 31 December 2013.
- 24 That, pursuant to rule 7(c)(i), the National Executive be empowered to amend the rules of any state branch as required to implement the National Principles of Organisation.

Part D—Resolutions to Implement National Principles of Organisation

General membership system

- 1
 - (a) Each state should adopt a system to allow applications to be processed and accepted by the head office thus allowing potential expansion of a general membership system.
 - (b) A general member initially has only the right to take up at their initiative the process of becoming a full member through the branch membership system. The general members are to be encouraged to contribute to the Party in whatever way they can and they are bound to assume the responsibilities of supporting the Party both privately and publicly.
 - (c) Any general member of five years or more standing could be considered for preselection provided the majority request of all Party members in their respective electorate was made and/or the majority request of that State Branch Administrative Committee or Executive was made. (for guidance to the state branches)

National organisation—ongoing review

- 2
 - (a) That the National Executive take responsibility for an ongoing process of organisational review. The National Executive should establish a Standing Committee to initiate proposals, or receive submissions from members and affiliates, on the Party's rules, structures and political effectiveness.
 - (b) That an ongoing National Organisational Review Committee (ORC) be established with appropriate delegated powers under the guidance of the National Executive to continue the process of improving the effectiveness, participation and accountability of the Party's organisation.
 - (c) That the ORC undergo a consultative process with state branches, union affiliates, Party units and members on strategies to achieve the following objectives:
 - (i) strategies to increase the level of ALP branch membership;
 - (ii) strategies to encourage more trade unions to affiliate to the ALP and to involve unions more effectively in the Party's decision-making processes;
 - (iii) strategies the ALP should consider in order to defeat coalition party proposals to undermine the existing arrangements for trade union affiliation; and
 - (iv) strategies to increase the participation of women at all levels within the ALP.
 - (d) That the National Secretariat provide adequate resources for the committee to meet its objectives.

Preselections

- 3

State and territory campaign directors should consult the Leader and the National Campaign Director before the selection of candidates in both target and safe Labor seats to discuss quality potential candidates. This process should begin at least 18 months prior to the next election. It is the responsibility and obligation of Party officers and other influential figures within the Party to ensure that quality candidates are preselected in all seats. The Party must also actively identify and encourage candidates from a wide range of occupations and life experiences.

Member engagement

- 4 That, as a first step towards re-engaging with Party members, the National Secretariat conduct the first national survey of Party members to seek their views, expectations and attitudes to the Party. Suggestions about improving Party organisation should also be sought. That the results of the survey be published in summary form to members.
- 5 That the National Executive discuss and determine a membership growth target for increasing membership over the next five years, with progress targets set for each year. That membership numbers achieved be reported on an annual basis to the membership.
- 6 That the Party establish a cost-effective national campaigning organising and training academy to boost the skills, awareness and knowledge of members to allow them to better participate in Party-building and recruitment activities.
- 7 That a system of small, annual grants be established at a national level to assist with Party-building activities. That local branches be encouraged to apply for grants and the scheme be overseen by a panel of senior Party members, removed from the day-to-day affairs of the Party.
- 8 That the Party at a national level institute a Labor Community Dialogue program as has occurred at state levels of the Party, to facilitate access and discussion between the Party, community organisations and community leaders, and that this be supported by an active series of online engagement opportunities that would connect progressive community organisations with the Party at both a membership and parliamentary level.

Affiliated unions

- 9 That, in order to encourage the participation of more union members in the Party, affiliated unions be requested to ask members on joining or renewing their membership to become involved in the Party, through such means as voting in primaries (if applicable), representing the union at Party conferences and joining the Party.

Part E—Register of Conference decisions

Members initiating legal proceedings (decision of the 1955 Conference)

- 1 This Conference resolves that as a general principle it cannot concede the right of any member of the Party to initiate legal proceedings for the purpose of establishing the constitutional behaviour of the Labor Movement. We emphasise that, with a few isolated exceptions, the history of our Party discloses we have functioned on a basis of complete determination in accordance with our own rules and our own interpretation of them. We insist we must continue to create our own procedures, taking care of our own business without the introduction of lawyers and law courts.

Union elections (decision of the 1963 Conference)

- 2 Conference believes that industrial legislation should provide for trade unions to properly determine their own internal policies in accordance with their rules and constitutions and deplores interference in trade unions activities by any government, outside individuals or organisations. Conference accordingly calls upon all trade unionists to refrain from interference in the internal affairs of another trade union.

Grievance procedures (decision of the 1979 Conference)

- 3 That Conference believes that the procedures of the Party at state and national level provide adequate opportunity for people who are dissatisfied to seek redress of grievance and calls upon all members of the Party in respect of matters in dispute to refrain from making comment outside the Party.

Affirmative action (decision of the 1981 Conference)

- 4 (a) That Conference:
 - (i) asserts its support for affirmative action to ensure greater representation of women in the Party structures and amongst its representatives at all levels of government;
 - (ii) endorses the Guidelines for Implementation of an Affirmative Action Programme in the ALP, June 1981, produced by the Working Party on Affirmative Action, drawn from the state women's groups and requests each state and territory branch to implement an affirmative action programme in keeping with these guidelines
 - (iii) requests the National Executive to monitor regularly progress in each state branch and to report to each National Conference.
- (b) That all Party publications and Party ballot papers be given an indication of sex by use of given names.
- (c) That it be the policy of the ALP to investigate, instigate, and fund the provision of childcare facilities at all conferences and large assembly meetings of the Party.

- (d) That it be the policy of the ALP that all Party literature and publications should be free of sexist terms and sexist overtones; similarly all Party conferences, meetings etc. should be free of sexist comments, terms and overtones of any kind and all officers, MPs and members of the Party should be advised accordingly.
- (e) (i) Conference notes the enormous progress that has been made since 2002 towards achieving the targets in rule 10.
- (ii) Conference is of the view that the final attainment of the targets in rule 10 needs to be balanced with the desirability of not interfering in the preselection of sitting MPs.
- (iii) Conference recognises this is a complex issue, which requires detailed consideration by both the National Executive and the National Labor Women's Network.
- (iv) Accordingly, Conference directs the National Executive and the NLWN Executive to establish a joint working group to report back to National Conference on the most appropriate mechanism for implementing the view Conference has expressed in subparagraph (ii).

Abortion (decision of the 1984 Conference)

- 5 Conference resolves that the matter of abortion can be freely debated at any state or federal forum of the Australian Labor Party, but any decision reached is not binding on any member of the Party.

Conduct of ballots (decision of the 1994 Conference)

- 6 Procedures for conduct of ballots if required:
 - (a) that ballots for multiple vacancies be conducted in accordance with the rules of the Victorian Branch
 - (b) that ballots for single vacancies be conducted under the optional preferential system; and
 - (c) that ballots for multiple vacancies be conducted in accordance with rule 10(a).

ALP Code of Conduct for Fundraising (decision of the 1994 Conference)

Preamble

- 7 Australia's political and economic stability is dependent on the strength of our democracy. The Labor Party believes that democracy in Australia will be strengthened by moderate and equal financial contributions from corporate Australia to both sides of politics.
 - This code of conduct establishes the conditions that govern fundraising by the Labor Party at state, territory and national levels. It is binding on all Labor Party branches, units and candidates for public office.
 - Funds are raised by the organisational wing of the Labor Party to assist candidates for public office to gain and/or maintain office.
 - Funds are needed for policy development, Party administration and, most importantly, campaigning. All these political tasks must be carried out federally and in each state and territory.

- Each State, Territory and National Secretary of the Labor Party has a responsibility to raise funds.
- Campaign responsibilities can overshadow the need for adequate funds to support a strong and effective party organisation. Lack of funding for party maintenance and administration not only drains the Party's ability to develop policy and membership, but also undermines Labor's ability to campaign effectively and therefore undermines the stability of Australia's political system.

Organisation of fundraising

- The Party's National Director of Fundraising is the National Secretary. State and Territory Directors of Fundraising are the relevant State or Territory Secretary.
- Each state and territory branch and the National Secretariat raise funds cooperatively but separately.
- Each state and territory branch and the National Secretariat has a Finance Committee and a Fundraising Director. These individuals and their committees and/or donation collectors have sole responsibility for fundraising for their respective branches. Each branch organises its efforts independently and according to its own methods.
- State and Territory finance committees, all of whose members act in a voluntary capacity, collect funds from individual unions and corporations. Such funds supplement the Party's income from normal membership dues and affiliation fees.
- The National Secretariat collects funds for national campaigning, maintenance of the National Secretariat and the support of various state branches. These funds support the National Secretariat's role of national policy development, assistance to the federal Parliamentary Party and maintenance of the Party's professional and voluntary organisation throughout Australia.
- State, Territory and national offices shall operate systems of "centralised banking".
- All local campaign and other party accounts will be held under the relevant state or territory central banking system with the relevant Tax File Number.

Conditions

- The Labor Party observes a fundraising code of conduct. This code is fundamental to the integrity of the Party and its organisational and Parliamentary members.
- Parliamentarians can, and should, voice the Party's needs for funds or services and on occasions sign appeal letters.
- On reasonable request, Parliamentarians can, and should, speak or appear at Labor Party fundraising events.
- Members of the Parliament or candidates should not accept money or services on the Party's or their own behalf, above the amount of \$3000 from any one source. Donations that are accepted must be held in appropriate Labor Party central banking accounts styled in the form: Australian Labor Party Campaign Account.
- Any funds held in accounts, or otherwise not under a state or territory central banking system with the relevant Tax File Number, will be regarded by the Australian Labor Party and any other interested party as 'personal accounts'.
- Cheques should be made payable to the Australian Labor Party named account, not individuals.
- It is the legitimate responsibility of the relevant Fundraising Director, Finance Committee members and/or collectors to accept money on behalf of the Party.
- On the written authority of the relevant State, Territory or National Secretary, Parliamentarians or Candidates may act as fundraising agents for the Labor Party.

- Members of parliamentary executives may not be asked to act as fundraising agents or collectors.
- The detail of donations shall be publicly disclosed as per the requirements of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918— the Labor Party does not accept funds that are subject to conditions of any kind.
- Under no circumstances will the Labor Party accept funds which, even if only by inference, are intended to obtain the Party's support for specific actions, attitudes or public statements.
- Donors have a right to put views to the Party-but a right to no more than that.
- The Labor Party never raises funds on behalf of any other party or organisation.
- Under no circumstances will the Labor Party or any of its endorsed candidates accept donations from the tobacco industry.
- Candidates for public office who act outside these guidelines will be liable to sanctions by the relevant Labor Party Caucus or State or Territory Administrative Committee or other interested parties.

National Conference decisions

- 8 That decisions of National Conference are equally binding on all members of the Party whether determined as Platform or as a decision of Conference. However, decisions of Conference which relate to matters of policy lapse if they are not reaffirmed by the subsequent Conference. Decisions of Conference which relate to organisational, administrative or rules matters continue in force until a subsequent Conference otherwise determines.

Same sex marriage

- 9 Conference resolves that the matter of same sex marriage can be freely debated at any state or federal forum of the Australian Labor Party, but any decision reached is not binding on any member of the Party.

Party reform

- 10 (a) Broaden the Party by recruiting 8000 new members

The Party's most critical connection to the community is its members.

Yet in recent decades the Party has endured a steady decline in membership. This decline is the great organisational challenge of our generation. Strong member participation is the lifeblood of organisations such as trade unions, community organisations, faith-based groups and sporting clubs. It is members who provide Labor with its most direct, most fundamental connection to the community.

We were the people's party, and we need to be again.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard set an ambitious target for Australian Labor to broaden its base by recruiting 8000 new members in 2012.

National Conference therefore:

- (i) approves Prime Minister Gillard's target to recruit 8000 new members in 2012

- (ii) encourages State and Territory branches to implement a community organising model to empower members and supporters to recruit, organise and campaign locally
- (iii) encourages State and Territory branches to report their recruitment figures to the National Executive.

(b) Reduce excessive membership fees

In some State and Territory branches, membership fees are higher than for comparable organisations. This discourages the involvement of young people and low-wage workers.

National Conference therefore encourages state and territory branches to:

- (i) review their membership fees
- (ii) consider offering discounts for Young Labor members and affiliated union members, where they do not already do so.

(c) Launch a National Labor Community Dialogue program

Labor Community Dialogue programs have been launched at a state and territory level. These programs seek to build stronger links between Labor and the community sector with the objective of:

- developing broader consultative capacity to support and inform Labor's policy development
- building lasting networks of mutual support for Labor, Labor members, Labor's elected representatives and the community sector
- enhancing Labor's presence within the community.

These partnerships are mutually beneficial for Labor and progressive community organisations.

National Conference therefore directs the National Secretariat to:

- (i) launch and provide ongoing support for a National Labor Community Dialogue program
- (ii) coordinate the activities of the National Labor Community Dialogue program with those of Labor Connect to develop a streamlined approach to community outreach.

(d) Support branches and Labor PACs in working with the community

While many of our Party members volunteer in community and school organisations, branches and formal Party structures can be detached from these groups.

National Conference therefore encourages each branch and Labor PAC to 'adopt' a community organisation, and actively engage in that group's activities and mission.

The branch or Labor PAC could adopt a new organisation each year, while still maintaining links with previous 'adoptees', or build an enduring relationship with one group over a number of years.

This proposal will:

- connect our members with their community in a tangible and meaningful way
- enhance the community's understanding of Labor and our members' understanding of their community
- realise Labor values at a grass-roots level
- broaden guest speaker opportunities for the branches and Labor PACs
- extend the community dialogue concept to every member of the Party.

(e) Strengthen the party's connections to the union movement

Although trade union members share some of the same values as Labor members, they are often not Party members and often do not vote Labor. To grow our Party, we need to engage, activate and recruit union members.

National Conference therefore directs the National Secretariat to work with affiliated unions to:

- (i) develop a political engagement strategy based on the model already developed by a number of unions
- (ii) engage union members and encourage them to participate in Party activities.

The 2007 federal election campaign was aided by effective co-ordination between Labor and affiliated unions. It is worthwhile establishing a process to ensure consistency and transparency between Labor and union campaigns.

National Conference therefore directs the National Executive to form a combined Campaign Reference Group with affiliated unions.

(f) Make voter engagement central to Labor campaigns

As a broad labour movement, we will always be able to activate more supporters than our conservative opponents.

We must take advantage of this.

The philosophy is simple: we need to activate more members and connect with more voters more often. By reconnecting with our base through large scale direct voter contact, we can strengthen our membership and our electoral position.

National Conference therefore encourages state and territory branches to:

- (i) implement a community organising model to empower and equip members and supporters to recruit, organise and campaign locally
- (ii) report their budgets and organising activities to the National Executive.

Under this community organising model, Party members will be provided with more resources, training and support, so that they can identify Labor supporters, recruit new members, hold local events, run local campaigns, communicate and engage with voters, and produce and distribute material.

As part of the community organising model, Australian Labor will expand its direct voter contact system, which was trialled during the South Australian, Victorian and NSW State elections. This will enable members from all over Australia to help on campaigns at the click of a button.

National Conference directs the National Executive to establish an Organising Committee to consider developments in community organising and campaigning, and make recommendations about community organising and campaigning initiatives to the National Executive. The Organising Committee will contain representatives from trade unions, rank and file members, the Parliamentary Party and the organisational wing of the Party, appointed according to the principles of proportional representation.

National Conference directs the National Secretariat to continue to prioritise the upgrades of Electrac and LaborConnect, and investigate further integration with party databases and extranets.

(g) Support State and Territory branches considering direct election

To make our Party more active, we need to increase participation amongst rank and file members.

One proposal for strengthening rank and file involvement is to provide the option of directly electing National Conference delegates in a ballot of financial members in an electorate.

Different models for electing delegates to Party conferences are used in different states and territories. Each of these models reflects the unique political environment in that state or territory.

National Conference therefore:

- (i) recognises that each state and territory branch will approach the election of National Conference delegates differently
 - (ii) supports state and territory branches that are considering direct election
 - (iii) recognises that the National Principles of Organisation require that state and territory branch conferences comprise 50 per cent trade union representation, and 50 per cent Party constituency representatives
 - (iv) reaffirms that this principle of 50/50 representation must continue
 - (v) affirms that the local determination of National Conference delegates should not come at the expense of trade union representation
 - (vi) affirms that some of the National Conference delegation should continue to be elected in such a way as to ensure the principle of 50/50 representation is maintained.
- (h) Increase recognition of member contributions

Australian Labor relies on rank and file members volunteering their time to recruit, organise and campaign for the Party.

To encourage active participation by members, we need to demonstrate that their contributions are valued.

Rank and file member awards have been established at the state and territory level to recognise dedicated Party members.

National Conference therefore directs the National Secretariat to establish annual national awards to recognise the commitment and service of outstanding Party members.

- (i) Introduce new mechanisms for member feedback

Any successful membership-based organisation must work hard to listen to its members and engage with their thoughts and ideas.

National Conference therefore:

- (i) supports the recommendation in the National Review that calls for the first national survey of members
 - (ii) encourages state and territory branches to develop entry surveys and exit surveys for all Party members.
- (j) Support more issues-based activism

The success of 'Get Up' and 'Say Yes' shows Australians want to engage in issues-based activism, particularly young Australians.

While Labor PACs will provide a formal mechanism for members to mobilise on specific issues, many of our members may:

- not have the time to be involved in a Labor PAC
- be interested in multiple issues
- prefer an informal, individual response to issues.

National Conference therefore encourages state and territory branches to offer members the opportunity to sign up to become advocates for particular Labor policies.

Members who sign up would be provided with a tool kit of resources, such as talking points and flyers, which they could use to communicate, mobilise third-party advocates and potentially attract new members. Consideration should also be given to providing members with the advice and tools to conduct social media campaigns.

Country Labor

- 11 That National Conference recognises the success of Country Labor in NSW since its establishment in 1999.

National Conference will establish a working group, coordinated by the National Secretariat, to investigate the expansion of Country Labor across Australia.

Part F—National Conference Standing Orders

Chair of Conference

- 1 The National President shall preside over Conference. In the President's absence the senior officer present shall preside. If no officers are present a delegate shall be appointed by Conference to preside.

Credentials

- 2
 - (a) Each body represented at National Conference or National Executive shall lodge with the National Secretary the names and addresses of its delegates as early as practicable before the meeting. These names and addresses shall be sent by the National Secretary to all members of the National Executive and other bodies represented at the National Conference as soon as possible.
 - (b) Any body or delegate may challenge the credentials of any delegate by lodging with the National Secretary the grounds of objection in writing within 14 days of being notified of the nomination of that delegate.
 - (c) The grounds of the objection shall be conveyed to the delegate challenged and to the body nominating the delegate by the quickest possible means. The National Executive shall hear and determine the challenge. An appeal shall lie to the National Conference. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the decision of the National Executive shall stand.

Session times

- 3 Conference shall meet each day from 9.30 am to 12.45 pm, and 2.15 pm to 5.30 pm, subject to Conference at any time, determining on motion or amendment without debate, and without rescission of any previous decisions as to meeting times, to meet at any other times.

Order of business

- 4 The agenda of the National Conference shall be as distributed by the National Executive pursuant to rule 6(j)(ii). The order of business shall be as determined by Conference from time to time.
- 5 No discussion shall be allowed except on motion or amendment duly proposed and seconded.
- 6 Any member desiring to propose a motion or amendment, or to discuss any matter under consideration, must address the chair. No member shall address the Conference unless called by the Chair of Conference.
- 7 All questions shall be determined in the following manner:
 - (a) the mover of the motion shall have seven minutes to present argument in support of the motion and five minutes to reply
 - (b) the seconder of such motion, and all other speakers, shall be limited to five minutes

- (c) the movers and seconders of motions and amendments must exercise the right to speak at the time of moving and not subsequently, subject to the right of reply by the mover of the motion
- (d) Conference on motion without debate may extend the time of any speaker; such extension of time shall not exceed five minutes. Conference may agree to further extensions on the same basis
- (e) the Chair shall call attention to the time of all speakers one minute before such time expires. Motions for extensions may be made when the Chair so calls, but no later
- (f) after the motion has been moved and seconded, and no speaker rises to oppose or move an amendment, the Chair shall proceed to put such motion to a vote of Conference
- (g) all votes of Conference shall be subject to the following procedure:
 - (i) the Chair shall call upon those who support the question to say 'Aye' and those who are opposed to say 'No'
 - (ii) the Chair shall then declare the question carried or lost;
- (h) any delegate not satisfied with the Chair's decision may, by standing in their place, call for a show of hands. The Chair shall proceed to determine the question by calling upon those who support the motion to raise their hands, and those opposed to act similarly. The Chair shall appoint two tellers to take the count and they shall be representative of the opposing viewpoints. When the tellers are agreed upon their count the Chair shall declare the result by quoting the figures for and against;
- (i) when any question voted upon by Conference results in equal numbers for and against, the Chair shall declare such question lost
- (j) any motion or amendment affecting the Pledge, Platform or Constitution of the Party shall be declared lost if less than a majority of delegates credentialled to the Conference vote for it.

Amendments

- 8 (a) At any time during debate on any motion it shall be competent for any delegate to move an amendment. All amendments must be seconded. Motions may be amended by adding words, by deleting words, or by deleting words and inserting others in their place, providing that the effect of any proposed amendment is not to establish a direct negative to the question contained in the motion.
- (b) Any number of amendments may be proposed and discussed simultaneously with the original motion, notwithstanding standing order 14. At the close of debate amendments shall be put in the order they have been moved.
- 9 No member shall speak more than once to any question before the Chair, unless by way of personal explanation or with the consent of the Conference. Such consent shall not be given unless by a majority of those present.
- 10 At any time during debate on any question it shall be competent for the Chair to accept a motion 'that the question be adjourned,' 'that the question be put', or 'that the next business be proceeded with', provided at least two speakers have spoken for and against. A member having spoken to the question shall not be competent so to move. Such motions shall be immediately put without debate, provided that in the event of Conference agreeing "that the question be now put" the mover of the original motion shall have the right of reply.
- 11 On Conference agreeing 'that the question be now put' it shall mean not only the question contained in the motion, but in any and all amendments.

- 12 No question shall be debated for a longer period than one and a half hours, subject to Conference agreeing on motion or amendment put without debate to extend such time. A two-thirds majority of those present shall be required to approve any such extension.
- 13 Motions directed towards the re-consideration of any decision reached by Conference shall fail unless carried by a three-fourths majority of the delegates credentialled to Conference.
- 14 Not more than two delegates in succession shall speak for or against any question.
- 15 All questions involving an interpretation of policy on any section of the Platform or the direction of members of the parliament in accordance with the principles and methods of the Party, shall be subject to decision by Conference on the basis of these Standing Orders and not by ruling of the President.
- 16 Questions other than those contained on the Agenda shall not be discussed unless agreed to by two-thirds of the delegates credentialled to Conference, and no delegate shall canvass the subject matter of the proposed new business when seeking Conference approval for discussion of same.
- 17 Rulings given by the Chair on any question shall be subject to a motion calling upon Conference to disagree with any ruling. In the event of such motion, the mover shall be permitted not more than five minutes to support the motion and the Chair shall be permitted not more than five minutes to defend the Chair's ruling. There shall be no other speakers. The Vice-President or any other delegate appointed by Conference shall occupy the Chair during the currency of such motion.